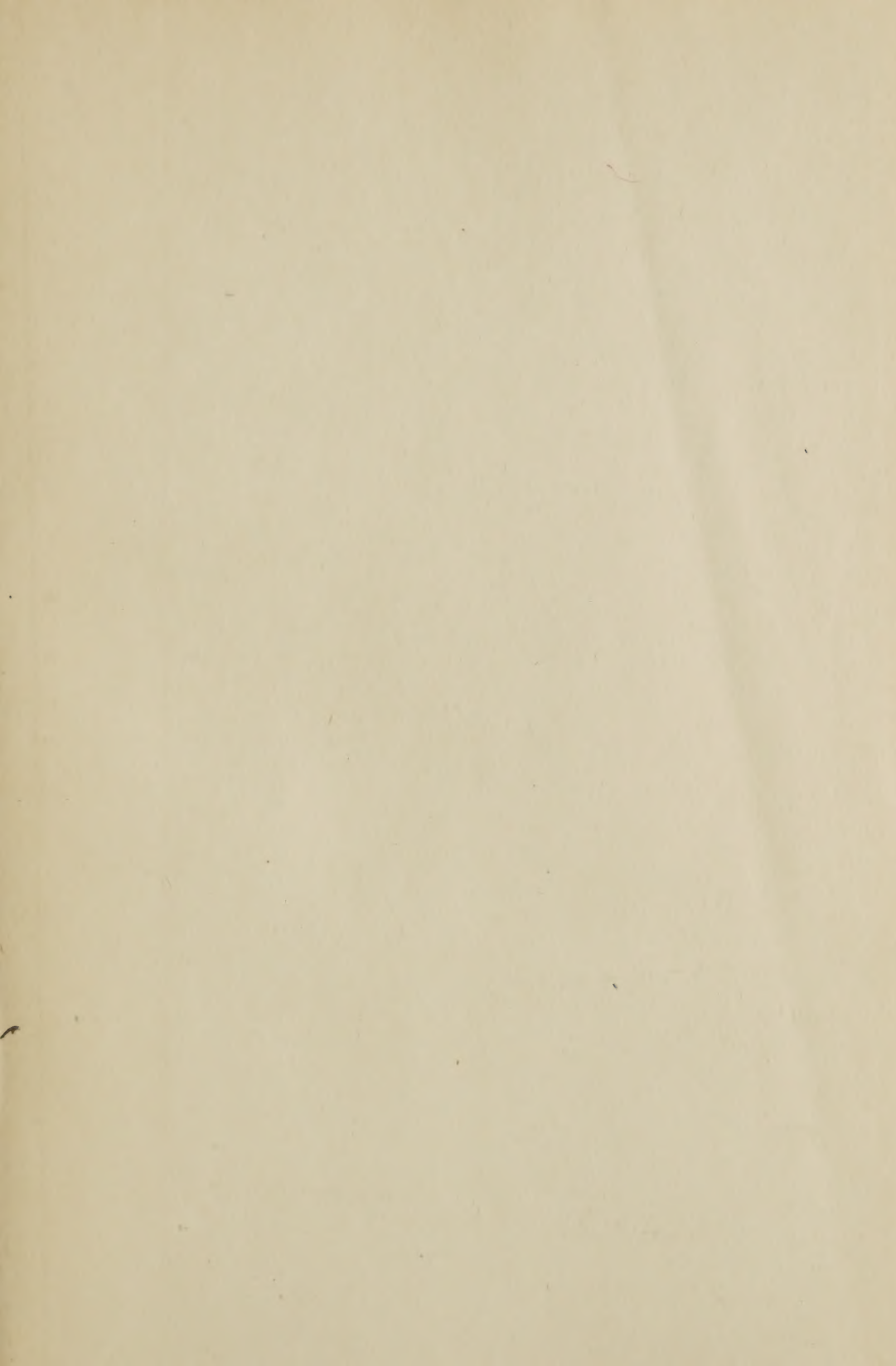
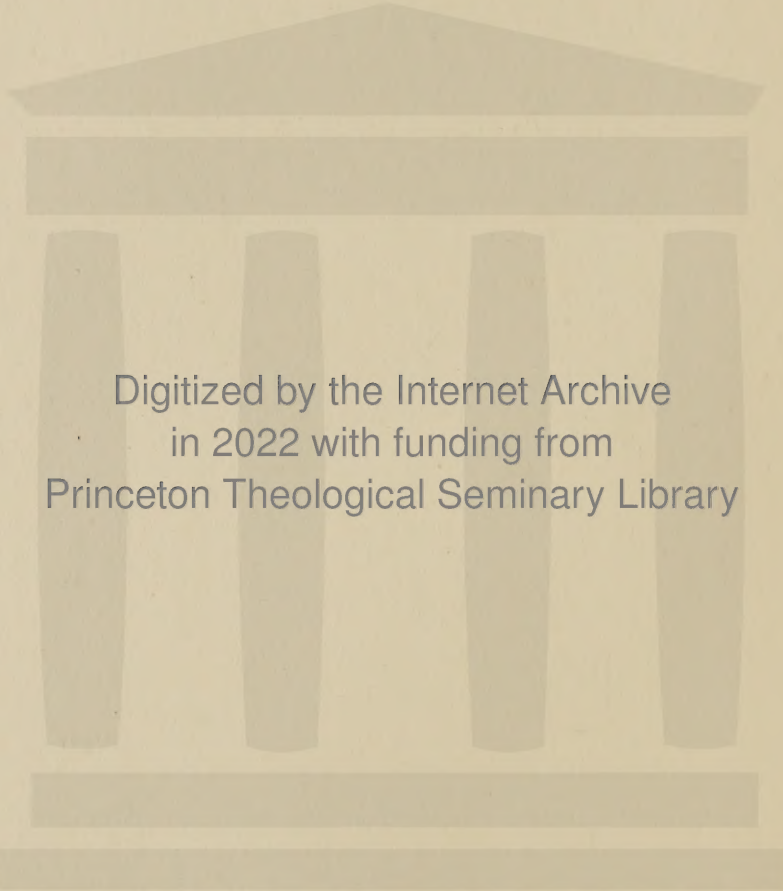


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STUDIES IN RHETORIC
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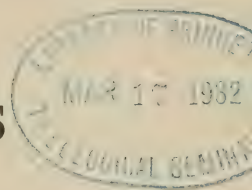
In Honor of
JAMES ALBERT WINANS

By
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NEW YORK
THE CENTURY CO.

1925



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To

JAMES ALBERT WINANS

upon his completion of a quarter of a century of teaching, during which period, by his work in college classrooms, by his writings, and by his personal qualities, he has exercised a beneficent leadership in the field of academic instruction in public speaking, this book is offered by his pupils and colleagues.

PREFACE

THE papers in this volume of Studies in Rhetoric and Public Speaking have been contributed by several of Professor Winans' pupils, colleagues, and friends, who prize their association with him in the work of the Department of Public Speaking in Cornell University. Those who have been familiar with academic instruction in public speaking in the United States during the last twenty-five years know how great the influence of Professor Winans' teaching, writing, and counsel has been. All contributors to this book have been moved by gratitude for that influence, and every one of them has the stronger motive of personal friendship in desiring thus to express his regard.

The publication of the volume was made possible by the contributions of a larger group of pupils, former colleagues, and friends who wished to share in this tribute to Professor Winans, and to join in a congratulatory recognition of his work as teacher for more than twenty years at Cornell University, and in recent years at Dartmouth College.

These resources were augmented by the coöperation of Professor Winans' publishers, the Century Company, whose secretary, Mr. Dana H. Ferrin, has given the publication his sympathetic and helpful attention.

The planning and general editing of the volume has been in charge of A. M. Drummond. Several of the contributors aided in preparing manuscript for the press, but the editor is especially indebted to Herbert A. Wichelns and Lee S. Hultzén for their generous assistance with the proofs.

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STUDIES IN RHETORIC
AND PUBLIC SPEAKING

STUDIES IN RHETORIC AND PUBLIC SPEAKING

PLATO AND ARISTOTLE ON RHETORIC AND RHETORICIANS

EVERETT LEE HUNT

I

THE art of rhetoric offered to the Athenian of the fifth century B.C. a method of higher education and, beyond that, a way of life. Plato attacked both. He gave rhetoric a conspicuous place in his dialogues because it represented in Athenian life that which he most disliked. His pictures of the rhetoricians are so broadly satirical that at times they become caricatures; but his literary power and philosophical originality have so impressed themselves upon succeeding ages that the sophists and rhetoricians of Athens have become symbolical of false pretense of knowledge, overweening conceit, fallacious argument, cultivation of style for its own sake, demagoguery, corruption of youth through a scepticism which professed complete indifference to truth, and, in general, a ready substitution of appearance for reality.

We have the more readily accepted Plato's account because these faults have never been absent from civilization. If the sophists and rhetoricians of Plato's dialogues had not existed, it would have been necessary to invent them. The qualities they typify are so universal that certain collective names for them have become a necessity for thought. Even Grote, the great defender of the historical sophists, when he desires to point out the fallacies of the Platonic Socrates, finds it convenient to accuse Plato of "sophistry."¹ These qualities are not only objectively ever present, but we attribute them readily to any persons or arguments when for any reason our approval has

¹ George Grote, *Plato*, London, 1888, III, 63.

not been won. An argument which we do not accept is sophistical, and the person who presents it a sophist. An appeal to the feelings of men which does not happen to warm our own hearts is rhetorical, and its author a rhetorician. It was so in Plato's time, and it was no more safe then than now to take the words "sophistry" and "rhetoric" at their face value.

When we ask, who were the sophists, what did they teach, and what is the connection between sophistry and rhetoric, we have asked questions involving great historical and philosophical dispute. Generations of historians of philosophy, accepting Plato's account, have made the sophists the scapegoats for all intellectual—and, at times, moral—delinquencies. It is to Hegel that the sophists owe their rehabilitation in modern times.¹ G. H. Lewes, five years before Grote published his famous defense of the sophists, characterized them as professors of rhetoric,² and pointed out the bias which had caused their unfair treatment at the hands of Plato. Grote's classic treatment of the sophists in his *History of Greece*³ was termed by Henry Sidgwick "a historical discovery of the highest order." "Before it was written," says Professor Sidgwick, "the facts were all there, but the learned world could not draw the right inference." In two vigorous essays he defends Grote and makes some significant contributions to the controversy.⁴ John Stuart Mill, in an extended review of Grote's *Plato*, defends his interpretation in almost all points, and furnishes many additional arguments in defense of the sophists.⁵ E. M. Cope, in his essays on the sophistic rhetoric, rejects many of Grote's conclusions.⁶ Zeller is not inclined to look upon the sophists with favor.⁷ Chaignet, in his history of rhetoric, accepts the conventional contrast between Plato and the sophists.⁸

¹ G. W. Hegel, *Lectures on Philosophy*, 2d ed., 1840, tr. E. S. Haldane, London, 1892.

² G. H. Lewes, *Biographical History of Philosophy*, London, 1857, pp. 87 ff.

³ Grote, *History of Greece*, London, 1851, VIII, 67.

⁴ H. Sidgwick, "The Sophists," *Lectures on the Philosophy of Kant and other Philosophical Lectures and Essays*, London, 1905.

⁵ J. S. Mill, "Grote's Plato," *Dissertations and Discussions*, New York, 1874, IV.

⁶ E. M. Cope, "The Sophistic Rhetoric," *Journal of Classical and Sacred Philology*, II (1855), 129-69, III (1856), 34-80, 253-88.

⁷ E. Zeller, *Pre-Socratic Philosophy*, tr. S. F. Alleyne, London, 1881, II, sect. iii. For still other points of view, see A. W. Benn, *The Greek Philosophers*, London, 1882, ch. 2. Also Sir A. Grant, *The Ethics of Aristotle*, London, 1874, I, 103-54.

⁸ A. E. Chaignet, *La Rhétorique et son Histoire*, Paris, 1888, pp. 43, 44.

Jowett, Plato's translator, accepts many of Grote's conclusions, but rejects others.¹ Gomperz, in his *Greek Thinkers*, written fifty years after Grote's history was published, says of his own contemporaries among historians of philosophy:

They still begin by handsomely acknowledging the ambiguity of the word "sophist," and the injustice done to the bearers of that name in the fifth century B.C. by the ugly sense in which the term came to be used, and they admit that restitution is due. But the debt is forgotten before it is paid; the debtor reverts to the old familiar usage, and speaks of the sophists once more as if they were really mere intellectual acrobats, unscrupulous tormentors of language, or the authors of pernicious teachings. The spirit may be willing, but the reason is helpless against the force of inveterate habits of thought. Verily the sophists were born under an evil star. Their one short hour of triumphant success was paid for by centuries of obloquy. Two invincible foes were banded against them—the caprice of language, and the genius of a great writer, if not the greatest writer of all times.²

The itinerant sophists founded no schools, and most of their works have been lost. The evidence in the case is therefore of the kind which makes endless argument possible. A few conclusions may, however, be stated as generally agreed upon. The term sophist originally had no unfavorable connotation, and was applied to any man who was thought to be learned. Thus the seven sages of Greece, universally honored, were at times called sophists.³ In the time of Plato the word carried with it something of reproach, but it was not a definitely understood term. Rival teachers employed it against each other. Thus Isocrates regarded speculative thinkers (Plato among them) as sophists, because he thought their speculations fruitless. He also attacked as sophists other teachers of rhetoric whose instruction he regarded as unintelligent, and whose promises to their pupils he thought impossible of fulfilment.⁴ The general public used the term with almost no discrimination, and Aristophanes seized upon Socrates as the sophist who could be most effectively lampooned.

As to what they taught, it has been established that such terms

¹ Introduction to his translation of Plato's *Sophist*.

² Theodore Gomperz, *Greek Thinkers*, tr. L. Magnus, New York, 1901, I, 422.

³ For citations illustrating the various uses of the word "sophist" by Greek writers, see Gomperz, *op. cit.*, I, 579.

⁴ Isocrates, *Antidosis, Against the Sophists*. For translations of selected passages see Jebb, *Attic Orators*, London, 1893, II, 124-47. See also W. H. Thompson, "On the Philosophy of Isocrates and his Relation to the Socratic Schools," in his edition of Plato's *Phædrus*, London, 1868.

as a sophistic mind, a sophistic morality, a sophistic scepticism, and others implying a common basis of doctrine, are quite without justification. Their common characteristics were that they were professional teachers, that they accepted fees, and that rhetoric was a large element in the teaching of virtually all of them. The general emphasis upon rhetoric does not mean that, as scholars, all the sophists found their intellectual interests centered in rhetoric. But rhetoric was the one subject with which they could be sure to make a living. The conditions which made rhetorical training a universal necessity in Athens have been frequently set forth. The sophist who was a master of rhetoric had a number of possibilities before him. He could win power and repute by the delivery of eulogistic orations at public funerals, or deliberative addresses at times of political crises. He could appear at games, or upon occasions of his own making, with what we sometimes call occasional, or literary, addresses, expounding Homer or other works of Greek literature. He could write speeches for clients who were to appear in court. He was not allowed to appear in person as an advocate unless he could show that he had a direct connection with the case, but the profession of logographer was profitable. Finally, he was more certain of pupils in rhetoric than in any other subject.¹ It is not strange, then, that with a wide range of individual interests, the sophists, with varying emphasis, should unite upon rhetoric as the indispensable part of their stock in trade.

The claim to impart virtue has at times been held to be the distinguishing mark of the sophist, and the attempt has been made to divide the sophists from the rhetoricians upon this basis. This cannot be done, for the two activities of making men virtuous and making them eloquent were inextricably intermingled. Hegel has pointed out what he regards as an essential difference between the sophists and modern professors.² The professor makes no pretension to making men good or wise; he only presents to students his organized knowledge, realizing that knowledge comes but wisdom lingers. The sophists, on the other hand, laid claim to some actual effect from their teachings; they made men wise. This was at least in part due to the dominance of rhetoric. Aristotle might lecture

¹ See O. T. Navarre, *Essai sur la Rhétorique Grecque avant Aristote*, Paris, 1900.

² Hegel, *op. cit.*, I, 352.

upon the theoretical aspects of rhetoric—a procedure which seems to have been productive of little eloquence—but the prime purpose of the teaching of rhetoric was practical. Certain sophists made the payment of their fees dependent upon some proof that they had actually given to a pupil the ability to persuade an audience. With such a background, it is natural that the teaching of ethics as abstract knowledge would seem about as futile as the teaching of an abstract rhetoric. A man who taught ethics taught it practically, with injunctions and exhortations, and he expected practical consequences to follow. But one of the consequences always looked for was that the pupil should become such a person as to be persuasive when speaking in a public assembly. Ethics thus was often absorbed in rhetoric. The failures of many pupils to become either good or persuasive gave rise, then as now, to cynical reflections upon the futility of education, and there were many arguments as to whether virtue or rhetoric could be taught. In these arguments there were two extreme positions. Some inclined to believe that if you teach a man to be virtuous, he will naturally be eloquent, and rhetorical instruction is unnecessary. Other sophists believed it quite impossible to teach virtue, but by constant attention to becoming a persuasive speaker, virtue would be unconsciously acquired. The controversy over the relation of virtue to eloquence runs through the history of rhetoric, and may be viewed as a technical question in that field. The attitude of sophists toward the teaching of virtue, then, cannot distinguish the sophists from the rhetoricians, and for the purposes of our study the two terms may be used almost synonymously—the word sophist, perhaps, being somewhat more inclusive.

II

The way in which the sophists combined their own intellectual interests with the teaching of rhetoric may best be made clear by a brief study of the four principal figures: Prodicus, Hippias, Protagoras, and Gorgias. Since these are the men most often referred to by Plato, it is also desirable to have some historical knowledge of them with which to correct the impressions given by the Platonic pictures.

Protagoras and Gorgias were older than Prodicus and Hippias, but they lived longer and matured later. They were therefore more affected by the movement away from the natural sciences, and as

humanists devoted a larger portion of their energies to definitely rhetorical instruction.

Prodicus of Ceos has been called the earliest of the pessimists.¹ He was frail of body, but with a powerful voice he moved his audiences by descriptions of the different ages of man from birth to second childhood and death. He would depict death as "a stony-hearted creditor, wringing pledges one by one from his tardy debtor, first his hearing, then his sight, and next the free movement of his limbs."² His pessimism had none of the usual consequences—passive resignation, retreat from the world, or a great desire to seek pleasures while they might be found. To face death courageously was a virtue, and he taught his disciples that while we are, death is not; when death is, we are not. Life, while it lasted, was to be lived vigorously. His most famous lecture, *The Choice of Hercules*, has been preserved by Xenophon,³ who tells us that Socrates quoted it with approval; through many centuries it has had a great effect in exalting the ideals of labor, hardihood, and simplicity. It was not in popular religion that Prodicus found his sustaining faith, for his speculations upon the origin of religion have the point of view of the modern critical historian. He accounted for the divinities of the various nations by pointing out that they deified the objects most useful to them—sun, moon, rivers, fruits of the field, and heroic men.

The more technical instruction of Prodicus was devoted to a study of language. He sought to collect and compare words of similar meaning. He desired to reduce the ambiguities in the arguments of the Greeks, and to aid in the development of literary style. He attempted to clarify ideas by insisting upon accuracy in the use of words, believing, with Hobbes, that "the light of human minds is perspicuous words."

The lectures of Prodicus were well known in all the cities of Greece, and commanded large sums in all places except Sparta, where foreign teachers were discouraged by a law against the payment of

¹ For Prodicus, see the following: Philostratus, *Lives of the Sophists*, tr. W. C. Wright, New York, 1922, pp. 37-9; F. Welcker, "Prodikos von Keos, Vorgänger des Sokrates," *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie*, III (1833), 1-39; Gomperz, *op. cit.*, I, 425-30; Benn, *op. cit.*, I, 77-81; Bromley Smith, "Prodicus of Ceos," *Quarterly Journal of Speech Education*, VI, ii (1920), 51.

² Pseudo-Platonic *Axiochus*, 360, D. Cited by Gomperz, *op. cit.*, I, 428.

³ Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, tr. E. C. Marchant, New York, 1923, II, ch. I.

fees. Nevertheless he was welcomed there. He served his native island frequently as ambassador, and in the discharge of his civic duties displayed the qualities which in his lectures he urged upon youth.

Prodicus, then, was the rhetor rather than the teacher of rhetoric; and his chief contributions to the thought of his time were made as philosopher and grammarian.

Hippias of Elis, whom Plato especially disliked, is chiefly remembered for his versatility.¹ As an orator he was known throughout Greece. He recited certain well-known compositions of his in which figures of the Iliad are compared upon the basis of their virtues, or old men give advice to aspiring youths. He was rewarded by being made a freeman of many cities, and it is especially significant that his lectures on history and ethics were also acceptable to the conservative Spartans. He never gave himself to the routine of perfecting his students in rhetoric, but was occupied with innumerable pursuits. He was a mathematician of considerable note; he wrote on theories of sculpture and painting, on phonetics, rhythm, and music; he developed a system that enabled him to perform surprising feats of memory in his old age; he was an ambassador for his native city, Elis; he attempted most of the prevailing forms of literature; and he prided himself upon his facility in mastering all the arts and crafts.

The antithesis between nature and convention seems to have originated with Hippias. He observed the variety and changeability of the laws of the Greek democracies, and felt that only laws possessing the universality and permanence of the laws of nature should be really sacred and binding. To give validity to the laws of men, the laws of all states should be compared, and the universal elements in them selected as the "natural" laws for the governing of nations. In believing that all men were by nature equal, Hippias was perhaps the originator of the doctrine of natural rights. When the distinction between nature and convention has been clearly made, one may, of course, espouse either. Hippias was one of the first preachers of a return to nature. This suggests a reason for his efforts to achieve so wide a versatility. The return to nature is only possible when each person is relatively self-sufficient, and self-sufficiency was a favorite doctrine with Hippias. He doubtless believed, as have men of other

¹For Hippias, see Philostratus, *op. cit.*, p. 35; Gomperz, *op. cit.*, I, 431-4; Bann, *op. cit.*, I, 81-5.

ages, that the development of personality gained by the consciousness of being equal to any situation more than offsets the dissipation of energy and efficiency incurred by the performance of all sorts of tasks; but one motive was clearly that of independence, and the development of the sort of ingenuity that enables a Robinson Crusoe to exist. Such a man would live by his work as well as by his wits. Rhetoric would not be the chief means of obtaining what he desired, and it is not surprising that rhetoric should be relatively less important to those who would be governed by nature than to those who saw in convention the power that offers the best government.

Hippias was more than a popular orator preaching to the cities of Greece. In his thought we have the beginnings of the cosmopolitanism of the later Cynics, the self-sufficiency of the Stoics, the belief in natural rights, and the ideal of versatility as a means of developing the whole man.

Protagoras of Abdera accepted the distinction of Hippias between nature and convention; but he had no sympathy for the return to nature.¹ In the variety and changeability of the laws of men lay the great hope of progress. He therefore turned away from the natural sciences and devoted himself to the "humanities." He, too, was a man of great versatility; he invented a porter's pad; as a friend of Pericles, he was given the task of framing the laws for the colony at Thurium. As a teacher, his instruction was chiefly intended to offer a training for public life. He included within his curriculum oratory and its auxiliary arts, educational theory, jurisprudence, politics, and ethics. In his teaching of public speaking he insisted upon the value of practical exercises. He declared that there were two sides to every proposition, and that a speaker should be able to set forth the arguments on either side. His practice of having his students argue upon both sides of certain general themes may have been responsible for the charge against him, recorded by Aristotle, that he made the worse appear the better reason. But as this was a standing reproach against philosophers as well as rhetoricians, and as we have no evidence which impeaches his moral character, we may believe

¹ For Protagoras, see the following: Philostratus, *op. cit.*, pp. 33-5; Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of the Philosophers*, tr. C. D. Yonge, London, 1853, bk. ix, ch. 8; Hegel, *op. cit.*, I, 372-8; Gomperz, *op. cit.*, I, 438-75; Bann, *op. cit.*, I, 85-95; E. Barker, *Greek Political Theory*, London, 1918, pp. 60-4; Bromley Smith, "Protagoras of Abdera," *Quarterly Journal of Speech Education*, IV (1918), 196.

that this charge applied no more to his teaching than to all instruction in the art of reasoning.

In addition to the training in debate, Protagoras practised his pupils in the development of what were called commonplaces. Speeches were made which praised or blamed certain human qualities, such as patriotism, friendship, courage, cupidity. These speeches had no reference to a concrete situation, but they equipped the pupils with a stock of thoughts and phrases for use when a real occasion demanded ready utterance. The debates developed keenness and dexterity; the commonplaces gave the speakers a certain copiousness and elegance.

Grammar was also given attention, and Protagoras is recognized as the first to introduce the subject into his curriculum. It has been remarked that the level attained by Greek literature before Protagoras wrote his book *On Correct Speech* seems to indicate that a mastery of language may be acquired quite independently of conscious rules. But the desire of Protagoras to introduce order and consistency in the tenses of the verb, moods of predication, and genders of substantives, was in harmony with the intellectual tendencies of the times, and shows him to have been by no means totally absorbed in the practical business of advising youth how to get on in the world.

The ethical theory of Protagoras was set forth in the lost work, *On the Incorrect Actions of Mankind*. In his seventieth year he read publicly, at the house of Euripides, his work, *On the Gods*. Only the first sentence has been preserved.

In respect to the gods, I am unable to know either that they are or that they are not, for there are many obstacles to such knowledge, above all the obscurity of the matter, and the life of man, in that it is so short.¹

Whether Protagoras meant to assail the belief in the gods, or whether he meant merely to point out that in the nature of the case we could not have *knowledge* of them, we do not know. At any rate, his scepticism so alarmed certain of his contemporaries that his book was publicly burned, and he was exiled.

The philosophical doctrine for which Protagoras is chiefly known, and for which he was vigorously assailed by Plato, is summarized in the dictum that man is the measure of all things. Since we have only

¹Diogenes Laertius, IX, 51.

the first sentence of the work in which this doctrine was developed, it is not strange that scholars are far apart in their interpretation of the meaning of Protagoras; but they are generally agreed that the Platonic interpretation of it in the *Theætetus* is quite unfair. Few interpreters now consider it to involve the degree of relativity and subjectivism with which Protagoras and the sophists generally have been burdened. Gomperz points out that a man who preached that anything was true which any one believed to be so, would not be the man to suffer for a denial of the possibility of knowledge of the gods. Professor F. C. S. Schiller, in his *Studies in Humanism*, devotes two dialogues to Protagoras; one explaining his humanism, and the other defending his scepticism. In his introduction to the volume Professor Schiller says:

Our only hope of understanding knowledge, our only chance of keeping philosophy alive by nourishing it with the realities of life, lies in going back from Plato to Protagoras, and ceasing to misunderstand the great teacher who discovered the measure of man's universe.¹

But this is not the place to discuss the philosophical aspects of the teachings of Protagoras; it is only desired to make it clear that there are grounds for regarding him as did Hegel.

[He was] not merely a teacher of culture, but likewise a deep and solid thinker, a philosopher who reflected on fundamental questions of an altogether universal kind.²

Gorgias of Leontini,³ who first appeared in Athens as the head of an embassy petitioning for aid against the aggressions of Syracuse upon Sicilian cities, is known as the founder of the art of prose. Chiefly interested in oratory of the epideictic type, he employed what is termed the "grand" style. The resources of the poets, whose works were so successful in holding the attention of Greek audiences,

¹ Schiller, *Studies in Humanism*, London, 1907, p. xiv.

² Hegel, *op. cit.*, I, 373.

³ For Gorgias, see the following: Philostratus, *op. cit.*, pp. 29-33; Diodorus Siculus, bk. xii, ch. 7; *The Historical Library of Diodorus the Sicilian*, tr. George Booth, London, 1814, I, 465-6; F. Blass, *Attische Beredsamkeit*, Leipzig, 1864, I, ch. 2; Navarre, *op. cit.*, ch. 3; W. H. Thompson's introduction to his edition of Plato's *Gorgias*, London, 1871; Hegel, *op. cit.*, I, 378-84; Gomperz, *op. cit.*, I, 476-94; Benn, *op. cit.*, I, 95-100; Bromley Smith, "Gorgias: A Study of Oratorical Style," *Quarterly Journal of Speech Education*, VII (1921), 335.

were turned to the purposes of the orator. Gorgias was interested in style for style's sake; his foreign accent and distinguished air delighted the Athenians; and throughout his career he sought to persuade by pleasing. The extravagances and artificialities of his style have often been pointed to as the source of the euphuism of the seventeenth century, and of the stylistic eccentricities of other periods of decadence.

It cannot be said, however, that the oratory of Gorgias was devoid of ideas. In common with other itinerant teachers, he preached Pan-Hellenism in all the cities of Greece. In his Olympian oration he urged the Greeks to cease their internal rivalries, and to turn their spears against the barbarians. In the Athenian funeral oration he warned his hearers that victories over their fellow Greeks called for dirges of lament. As a teacher of oratory, Gorgias was condemned by Aristotle for placing too much emphasis upon memorization and declamation.¹ Little is known concerning his pedagogical method, but there is no reason to suppose that it differed markedly from the custom of having the pupils declaim speeches written by themselves and by the master, drill in topics of amplification and depreciation, and practise upon commonplaces and disputations. Although an epideictic speaker would be constantly praising virtue and censuring vice, and in so doing could hardly avoid entertaining certain ethical theories, Gorgias never announced himself as a teacher of virtue. He agreed with Isocrates that one who tried to become persuasive in discoursing about justice and virtue and expediency would probably become as virtuous as mere knowledge could make him.

As a philosopher, Gorgias engaged in controversy with the Eleatic school. All we know of his book *On Nature or Not-Being*, is its threefold thesis that "Being does not exist, if it did exist it would not be cognizable, and if it were cognizable, the cognition would not be communicable."² We cannot here enter upon metaphysical questions; but the conventional construction put upon this thesis is that it goes beyond Protagoras, and is the ultimate of sophistical scepticism, that it is a nihilism which makes all knowledge impossible, that it makes immediate plausibility the sole standard of the critical judgment, and that rhetoric was the chief of all subjects for Gorgias because the one certainty of life was that the man who could persuade

¹ Aristotle, *Sophistici Elenchi*, tr. Edward Poste, London, 1866, ch. 34.

² As translated in Gomperz, *op. cit.*, I, 482.

others to do his will was, temporarily at least, the possessor of great power. This interpretation is not justified either by an examination of the philosophical disputes of the time, or by a study of the life of Gorgias himself. The Eleatic school, following Parmenides and Melissus, was quite willing to doubt all evidence of the senses, and yet to trust implicitly in *a priori* reasoning about Absolute Being. The protest of Gorgias against this was quite in harmony with the growing modesty of the scientific endeavor of the times, which was beginning to see the necessity of increasing knowledge bit by bit, and to question the claim of the philosophers to a higher knowledge. Had Gorgias, in denying the tenets of the Eleatics, meant that he believed scientific truth to be unattainable, it is not likely that he would have written upon physics, nor that a statue would have appeared upon the tomb of Isocrates representing Gorgias as directing the attention of his pupil to a globe. The attack of Gorgias upon the contradictions of his predecessors in philosophy does not show that he abandoned all search for truth. Socrates attacked his philosophical predecessors in a similar manner, he abandoned all inquiry in natural science, and he had as little confidence in the attributes of being as Gorgias; yet he is not accused of denying the validity of established scientific truth, or of abandoning all belief in the possibility of knowledge. The account of Gorgias offered by many historians of philosophy is a *reductio ad absurdum* rather than an interpretation.

Although we think of Gorgias chiefly as an orator and a teacher of oratory, and as a creator of a style which is now looked upon unfavorably, he was too active a participant in the philosophical controversies of his time for us to dismiss him as intellectually insignificant. Since we have lost his philosophical works, we cannot prove that he made a constructive contribution to the thought of his time, but his attack upon an absolutistic philosophy was something, and the evidence certainly does not warrant the supposition that he was guilty of meaningless absurdities, or that his teaching was necessarily immoral in its implications.

Numerous other rhetoricians might be mentioned—Polus and Thrasymachus especially—but our information concerning them is scanty, and the four we have dealt with are the most significant when we consider their prominence as rhetoricians, their contribution to the thought of the time, and the attention they received from Plato.

III

One is inevitably led to ask why such men as these have suffered so greatly in the estimation of posterity. Why has Plato's opinion been accepted uncritically and its perversions further distorted by later commentators? In addition to what has already been suggested—that we need the terminology of the attack upon the Athenian sophists to describe an ever present sophistry—there is the fact that Athenian hostility to the sophists has often been taken as a confirmation of Plato's account. This is to forget that Athenian public opinion distrusted the sophists for reasons similar to those which led it to execute Socrates, and that the disagreement between Plato and the Athenian public was profound. The activities which gave these teachers their influence with the Athenians were just the ones which led Plato to condemn them; while many aspects of their thought which led to popular disfavor were the ones which Plato would have regarded with approval. We may learn much about the sophists by contrasting the typical Athenian criticism of them with that of Plato.

In accounting for the disfavor with which the Athenians looked upon the sophists it must not be forgotten that a complementary picture of their power and influence could quite as easily be drawn, and that both are necessary to a true estimate of their position in Athenian life. The sophists exerted a much greater influence upon their times than Plato, and the element of jealousy should not be entirely overlooked in considering his attitude toward them.¹ But the conservative

¹ G. H. Lewes has shown why the relationship between the solitary thinker and the public speaker tends to remain constant. "The Sophists were wealthy; the Sophists were powerful; the Sophists were dazzling, rhetorical, and not profound. Interrogate human nature—above all, the nature of philosophers—and ask what will be the sentiment entertained respecting the Sophists by their rivals. Ask the solitary thinker what is his opinion of the showy, powerful, but shallow rhetorician who usurps the attention of the world. The man of convictions has at all times a superb contempt for the man of mere oratorical or dialectical display. The thinker knows that the world is ruled by Thought; yet he finds Expression gaining the world's attention. He knows that he has within him thoughts pregnant with human welfare; yet he sees the giddy multitude intoxicated with the enthusiasm excited by some plausible fallacy, clothed in enchanting language. He sees through the fallacy, but cannot make others as clear-sighted. His warning is unheeded; his wisdom is spurned; his ambition is frustrated; the popular Idol is carried onward in triumph. The neglected thinker would not be human if he bore this with equanimity. He does not. He is loud and angry in lamenting the fate of a world that can be so led; loud and angry in his contempt of

elements of the city, of whom Aristophanes was a prominent representative, charged the sophists with corrupting the youth. Plato dissented from this charge in the case of Socrates, and defended the sophists generally from it, asserting that the real corrupter of youth in Athens was public opinion, which the sophists only reflected.¹ John Stuart Mill, who had reasons for analyzing the motives of those who are overzealous in protecting the young, has stated the case most clearly:

When the charge of corrupting youth comes to be particularized, it always resolves itself into making them think themselves wiser than the laws, and fail in proper respect to their fathers and seniors. And this is a true charge; only it ought to fall, not on the Sophists, but on intellectual culture generally. Whatever encourages young men to think for themselves, does lead them to criticize the laws of their country—does shake their faith in the infallibility of their fathers and elders, and make them think their own speculations preferable. It is beyond doubt that the teaching of Socrates, and of Plato after him, produced these effects in an extraordinary degree. Accordingly, we learn from Xenophon that the youths of rich families who frequented Socrates, did so, for the most part, against the severe disapprobation of their relatives. In every age and state of society, fathers and elder citizens have been suspicious and jealous of all freedom of thought and all intellectual cultivation (not strictly professional) in their sons and juniors, unless they can get it controlled by some civil or ecclesiastical authority in which they have confidence. But it had not occurred to Athenian legislators to have an established Sophistical Church, or State Universities. The teaching of the Sophists was all on the voluntary principle; and the dislike of it was of the same nature with the outcry against "godless colleges," or the objection of most of our higher and middle classes to any schools but denominational ones. They disapproved of any teaching unless they could be certain that all their own opinions would be taught. It mattered not that the instructors taught no heresy; the mere fact that they accustomed the mind to ask questions, and require other reasons than use and wont, sufficed at Athens, as it does in other places, to make the teaching dangerous in the eyes of self-satisfied respectability. Accordingly, respectability, as Plato himself tells us, looked with at least as evil an eye on Philosophers as on Sophists.²

This explanation of Mill's is more applicable to the ethical and philosophical, than to the rhetorical, aspects of the sophists' teaching. To be sure, the rhetoricians professed to be able to speak upon either

one who could so lead it. Should he become a critic or historian of his age, what exactness ought we to expect in his account of the popular idol?"

Op. cit., p. 88.

¹ *Republic*, VI, 492.

² *Op. cit.*, IV, 262.

side of any case, and to impart this ability to their pupils; this was the cause of a certain distrust analogous to that with which lawyers are sometimes viewed today. But when lawyers turn public orators, they are the most vigorous and platitudinous upholders of the *status quo*. So the sophists, as public orators, illustrated and reënforced the received dogmas of Athenian society. Their speeches were acceptable to the most conservative. Even their teaching of the art of speaking upon either side of any case did not rest so much upon a willingness to attack prevalent morality and customs as it did upon the cultivation of an ability to make either side of the case *appear* to be consistent with common standards of right and justice. Rhetoric as the art of persuasion must always appeal to the people upon the basis of whatever beliefs they may happen to have. It is not likely, then, that it was the rhetoric of the sophists which led to the charge that they broke down religion and corrupted youth. It was rather that they concerned themselves enough with philosophy to incur something of the distrust with which speculative thought has always been viewed. In all the disputes between the earlier schools of philosophy there was one point upon which they were agreed; namely, that the popular beliefs and explanations of phenomena were entirely wrong. For them, as for modern philosophers, the incarnation of ignorance was "the man in the street." Their arrogance and their contempt for the public naturally roused resentment. Their lofty pretensions were contrasted with their apparent practical helplessness, and the story of Thales falling into a well while gazing at the stars is typical of the popular attitude toward philosophers. The popular distrust of the sophists was not so much that, as rhetoricians, they were different from Socrates and Plato, but that, as philosophers, they were so much like them.

There was a certain aspect of the rhetorical teaching which caused a portion of the public to dislike the popular teachers. After the downfall of the Thirty in Athens, it was evident that democracy was the order of the day. Members of the aristocracy could retain their power in the state only by developing their ability to persuade an audience. Teachers of rhetoric, in such a situation, were indispensable. But the fees charged by the sophists placed their instruction beyond the reach of many, who naturally resented what seemed an unfair advantage possessed by those more adequately trained for public life.

The fees of the sophists seem to have been a cause of universal reproach, but the feeling was too complex to be explained simply. There was, of course, the aristocratic bias of Athenian life. Physicians were the only wage-earners who suffered no loss of social standing. Sculptors were artisans rather than artists because their work was a method of gaining a livelihood. Plato, the man of wealth and family, was for once in agreement with the popular prejudice, and he attacked the sophists both for the insignificance of their petty fees, and for the large fortunes that they made.¹ The acceptance of fees marked a certain institutionalizing and mechanizing of higher education, which was disliked. The philosopher whose chief occupation was the pursuit of truth might impart his wisdom to such persons and at such times as suited him, without seriously interrupting his own thinking. He probably found a certain number of disciples a stimulus. But the introduction of fees and the acceptance of responsibility for practical training in public speaking made the teacher seem to be a servant of the pupil. He became a professional educator, and as such insisted disagreeably upon the importance of education. As philosophers, the sophists could probably have retained the measure of freedom and leisure that Plato demanded, even while accepting pay for their work. But as teachers of rhetoric they tended to become submerged in the routine of schoolmastering.

As philosophers, the sophists incurred a different sort of penalty for their fee-taking. Then, as now, certain activities of what may perhaps be termed men's higher natures were especially removed from thoughts of gain. We do not like to think that popular preachers are making money; we deplore the commercialized theatre, and the novel written only to sell. These activities, we believe, should be ends in themselves. It is not difficult to understand why the spectacle of foreign teachers coming to Athens to teach virtue for a price should have roused a resentment somewhat distinct from that of those who disliked the teaching of rhetoric.

IV

Turning to Plato, we have already noted that he shared the general dislike of fee-taking; but we should consider also those aspects of his thought which led him to dislike any persons who accepted

¹ *Apology*, 20; *Cratylus*, 384 and 391.

Athenian life and institutions and participated actively in public affairs. Mill has pointed out:

Plato, if he returned to life, would be to the full as contemptuous of our statesmen, lawyers, clergy, authors, and all others who lay claim to mental superiority as he ever was of the corresponding classes at Athens.¹

This would be true because Plato would find that our life bears a much closer resemblance to the Athens he knew, than to his *Republic*. We may cite the *Republic* and the *Laws* as sufficient evidence of Plato's discontent with the sorry scheme of things entire. He was not a reformer who could be contented with a gradual evolution in the direction of his ideals; nor did it disturb him that his Republic was not an earthly city; he was satisfied to believe that its pattern was laid up in the heavens. Scholars are becoming increasingly conscious, however, that his gaze was not exclusively heavenward as he wrote the *Republic*. He knew what he disliked in Athens, and his utopia owes at least as much to his dislikes as to his desires. Had the sophists and rhetoricians been the only objects of his scorn he might not have been driven to writing the *Republic*. But the politics, poetry, art, education, and religion of Athens were all wrong—so wrong that it was easier to paint a utopia than seriously to attempt the reformation of Athens. We may say in the beginning, then, that Plato's condemnation of rhetoric and rhetoricians is merely a small part of his condemnation of all contemporary civilization. We may note in passing, that rhetoric has its uses even for those who attack it; and that Plato's contrast between the rhetorician's world of appearance and the philosopher's world of reality was drawn with consummate rhetorical skill.

The supreme remedy for the ills of civilization, Plato believed, lay in the government of philosopher-kings. But until philosophers were kings, and could govern autocratically by their wisdom, without the necessity for persuading the multitude, they were to remain aloof from public affairs.

The lords of philosophy have never, from their youth upwards, known their way to the Agora, or the dicastery, or the council, or any other political assembly; they neither see nor hear the laws or votes of the State written or spoken; the eagerness of political societies in the attainment of offices,—

¹ *Op. cit.*, IV, 245.

clubs, banquets, and revels, and singing maidens, do not even enter into their dreams.¹

In Plato's ideal realm, there was no place for rhetoric as a political agency. Large questions of policy were to be settled by the philosophers. Administration of routine affairs was to be in the hands of experts. There would be no litigation, for there would be no laws. Laws were as absurd and useless for philosopher-kings as decrees of the public assembly would be for pilots and physicians, whose actions were governed by their own arts. Later in life Plato despaired of finding philosophers, even in utopia, who could be trusted to govern without laws, or of inducing people to have confidence in them, even if they could be found, and his *Laws* is a concession to that feeling. But even in his later utopia there was no freedom of utterance, without which, of course, the development of rhetoric would be an impossibility. With the dogmatism of age upon him, he laid down laws which were to be permanent. The games of children,² the restrictions upon foreign travel,³ the denial of freedom of speech, and the enforcement of ethical and theological dogmas,⁴ were all designed to protect the city against changes of any sort. The use of rhetoric in administering and interpreting the laws was also carefully guarded against.⁵

Although rhetoric had no place in the courts or political assemblies of Plato's ideal realms, its scope in another field was to be greatly increased. All the literature and art of the Greeks was to be examined with a single eye to its effect upon the morals of the citizens. Truth and beauty were subordinated to goodness—to goodness as Plato conceived it. Whenever the attempt is made to govern the ideals of a people by censoring art in the interests of a dogmatic morality, all art tends to become rhetorical. To say that rhetoric was banished from the Republic, then, is not quite true. It was driven out the door only to fly in at the window. The unsympathetic interpreter of Plato would say that literature became part of the educator's rhetoric, with Plato as chief educator and chief rhetorician; a better Platonist, however, would hold that literature and education became philosophy, with Plato as chief philosopher.

¹ *Theætetus*, 173. Jowett's translation.

² *Laws*, VII, 798.

³ *Laws*, XII, 950.

⁴ *Laws*, II, 662.

⁵ *Laws*, XI, 938.

One source of rhetoric and rhetoricians in any democracy is the continual and restless striving of the people to better their individual conditions. They perpetually seek to become what they are not, and in doing this they strive to bend the wills of others to their own ends. This state of affairs Plato avoided, in his *Republic*, by having a fixed and settled order of society, an order of experts, in which every man did his own work, and no man attempted the work of another. In this way ambitious, self-seeking demagoguery was to be eliminated.

There is no indication in the *Republic*, that even under philosopher-kings, with a scheme of education devised by Plato himself, and with art and literature revised in the interest of morals, the mass of the people were expected to rise to greater heights than a certain efficiency in minding their own routines. It is not particularly strange, then, that Plato had a great contempt for the people of Athens, who lived under a government so little influenced by Platonism. Plato adhered to the philosophic tradition in regarding public opinion as always wrong both because it was public and because it was merely opinion. Plato despised mere opinion almost as much as he did the public. He was never tired of contrasting the knowledge of the philosopher, who had attained real knowledge by dialectical investigation, and by contemplation of Ideas, with that shadow knowledge called opinion.¹ Sometimes, of course, opinion would turn out to be right. And right opinion had a certain value as a guide to action in practical affairs; but even right opinion fell far short of philosophic knowledge. Plato never believed that probability was the guide of life. Education, for him, was a process of keeping the mass of people at their tasks with as few opinions as might be, and of enabling the few whose intelligence would permit, to attain philosophic knowledge. Those who knew, were to abandon the pleasures of knowing, at stated intervals, and govern those who did not know. Thus opinion was largely to be eliminated from the State. The education given by the sophists and rhetoricians, on the other hand, was for the purpose of enabling a man to get on in a world of conjecture. Isocrates (whom we have not discussed, because, though he receives passing mention, he is hardly a figure in the Platonic pictures of contemporary rhetoricians) stated as his philosophy of education:

¹ See especially *Republic*, VI, 509 ff.

It is impossible to attain absolute knowledge of what we ought or ought not to do; but the wise man is he who can make a successful guess as a general rule, and philosophers are those who study to attain this practical wisdom.¹

Akin to this is the educational aim of Protagoras—given us by Plato, but probably quite acceptable to Protagoras:

If a young man comes to me he will learn prudence in affairs private as well as public, he will learn to order his own house in the best manner, and he will be best able to speak and act in affairs of state.²

The education given by the sophists varied with individual teachers, but in general it aimed to enable the pupils to become leaders of men in a democracy. It was practical in the sense in which all training for public affairs is practical; and it sought to enable the individual to use existing institutions rather than to overthrow them. The perversions of such education—half-knowledge, propaganda, demagoguery, philistinism, worship of the appearance of success—are probably even more prevalent now than then. Whether they are worse than the perversions of Platonism is too large a question to be argued here. But whether for good or ill, the conception of the aims and purposes of the American liberal college as set forth by the most distinguished modern educators, is much closer to Isocrates and Protagoras than to Plato.

It is evident, from Plato's literary activities as an idealistic reformer and creator of utopias, from his conception of the philosopher as the true governor of mankind, and from his social, political, and educational philosophy, that he would have differed profoundly from the sophists and rhetoricians, even had all of them possessed the highest character and wisdom.

V

It will be convenient to discuss Plato's treatment of rhetoric and rhetoricians under four heads: the pictures he has given us of the individual rhetoricians, his general indictment of rhetoric in Athens, his suggestions for the creation of a nobler and better rhetoric, and his later attack upon the eristical rhetoricians who imitated the argumentative methods of Socrates.

The Platonic pictures of the sophists are scattered throughout

¹ *Antidosis*, tr. J. F. Dobson, in his *Greek Orators*, New York, 1920, p. 142.

² *Protagoras*, 318.

the dialogues; but the most extended and vivid characterizations of them are in the *Protagoras*, the *Hippias Major* and *Hippias Minor*, the *Gorgias*, and the *Euthydemus*. Plato constantly contrasts them with the ironical Socrates. Socrates affects a great humility, the sophists are conceited and self-confident; Socrates is skilled in closely reasoned argument, the sophists are helpless in his hands; Socrates defines his terms, but the sophists, accustomed to haranguing uncritical audiences, use their terms with all the looseness and inaccuracy of common conversation.

Protagoras is pictured at the head of a group of admiring listeners, pleased at an opportunity to lecture in the presence of rival sophists.¹ Although the reader feels that in the discussion with Socrates common sense is with Protagoras, he cannot but be amused at the spectacle of the eloquent, deep-voiced orator unable to defend even a sound argument against the dialectical attack of Socrates. Protagoras, with his popular lectures and his conventional morality, was too powerful a figure to please Plato, who was somewhat neglected in the Academy.

Hippias seems to have incurred the most vigorous enmity of Plato.² In the *Hippias Minor* Socrates exposes the fallacies in the popular lecture on Homer that Hippias was accustomed to give before approving audiences. In the picture of Hippias at the Olympic games in garments, rings, and accoutrements of his own make, there is no suggestion that he was attempting to reënforce his favorite doctrine of self-sufficiency; the Platonic view is that Hippias was insufferably conceited over his versatility.

The references to Prodicus are scattered and incidental. He is described as a "taker to pieces of words,"³ as "drawing useless distinctions about names,"⁴ and as beginning his instruction with "initiation into the correct use of terms."⁵ In the *Cratylus* there is a satirical reference to the relationship between the fees of Prodicus and the amount of knowledge imparted.⁶

¹ For the Platonic treatment of Protagoras, see the dialogue of that name, and also *Cratylus*, 386; *Euthydemus*, 286; *Theætetus*, 152-78; *Meno*, 91; *Republic*, 600; *Phædrus*, 267.

² See *Hippias Major* and *Hippias Minor*. Only *Hippias Minor* is admitted into the Platonic canon by Jowett. Grote held to the genuineness of the *Hippias Major*, and gives an exposition of it in his *Plato*.

³ *Laches*, 197.

⁴ *Charmides*, 163.

⁵ *Euthydemus*, 277.

⁶ *Cratylus*, 384.

Gorgias is portrayed in the dialogue bearing his name¹ as professing to be able to answer any questions which may be asked him, and as being so familiar with all possible subjects of discussion that for many years he has heard no new question. He indulges in oratorical praise of the art of rhetoric, and is shown to be quite incapable of dialectical argument.

Polus,² a young pupil of Gorgias, Callicles,³ a practical politician rather than a professional rhetorician, and Thrasymachus,⁴ the spokesman for doctrines that Plato wished to discredit, are described as being much like the better-known sophists.

Euthydemus and Dionysodorus, who belong to a later group of sophists, are caricatured in the *Euthydemus* with a dramatic vivacity and comic force which almost equals the *Clouds* of Aristophanes. They are characterized as "a new importation of sophists," who "will give lessons in speaking and pleading, and in writing speeches."⁵ This occupation is new to them, for they were previously teachers of the art of fighting in armor. They also profess to be teachers of virtue.

Although there are no formal charges made against any individual sophists in any of the dialogues, Plato has used all his literary resources to add to the effectiveness of his philosophical attack upon them.

VI

There is in the *Gorgias* a deeper purpose than an exhibition of the deficiencies of the predominant rhetorical technique. Plato here gives us a contrast between the true and the false life. The philosophic import of the dialogue has led some commentators to believe that the treatment of rhetoric is only incidental, or that rhetoric is used merely as introductory to the higher themes of philosophy. But Plato, for all his idealism, took as the point of departure for his reforms the weaknesses which he thought he saw in Athens, and rhetoric is, after all, a chief subject of the dialogue. Rhetoric, as philosophy, was a way of life. Rhetoric dealt not only with form

¹Other characterizations of Gorgias are found in *Meno*, 70; *Phædrus*, 267; and *Symposium*, 198.

²*Gorgias*, 466 ff.

³*Gorgias*, 481 ff.

⁴*Republic*, I.

⁵*Euthydemus*, 272.

and style; it also treated the matter and policy of public speaking. It offered something of a philosophy to the orator. It was almost indistinguishable from political science, and to the general public the orator was the statesman.

If there was anything which could pretend to dispute with philosophy the position of a master knowledge, or put forward a rival claim for the guidance of life and affairs, it was this art of rhetoric, which professed to train men for politics, and to make them able to act as well as speak efficiently. The teacher of philosophy had thus to be vindicated against the teacher of rhetoric; the philosophical statesman had also to be vindicated against the orator-statesman of actual Athenian politics.¹

In contrasting the philosopher and the rhetorician, Plato at times gives the impression of being on the defensive. This is not merely because rhetoric is more popular, but also because he had felt the reproaches of his friends for his inactivity in Athenian affairs. He was keenly conscious of the criticism of the philosopher which he put into the mouth of Callicles:

He [the philosopher] creeps into the corner for the rest of his life, and talks in a whisper with three or four admiring youths, but never speaks out like a freeman in a satisfactory manner.²

One way to establish the supremacy of philosophy was to show that the claims of rhetoric as "the art of becoming great in the city,"³ were not to be taken seriously. There must be an appeal to higher values. The belief that might makes right, the trust in things that are seen, must be replaced with a desire for the goods of the soul. The ignorance, prejudice, and selfishness of the rhetorician must be exposed; the most popular of arts must be shown to be no art at all when subjected to the scrutiny of a philosophical mind. The *Gorgias*, then, undertakes to refute the claims made for rhetoric by Gorgias, Polus, and Callicles. Socrates defeats each one in turn, so that we really have three dialogues in one, each antagonist advancing a somewhat different claim for rhetoric.

Gorgias, in the beginning, praises rhetoric for the power and influence it confers. He also defends it from the oft-repeated charge that it is frequently used wrongfully and works mischief in the state. But the definition of rhetoric is what Socrates seeks, and Gorgias

¹ E. Barker, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

² *Gorgias*, 485.

³ *Gorgias*, 513.

appears to be as devoid of abstract ideas with which to frame a definition as the other rhetoricians. The art of formal logic did not yet exist, and Socrates presses Gorgias with various analogies and ambiguities which both appear to mistake for valid arguments. Logic and rhetoric have not yet been clearly conceived as universal arts or sciences which admit of application to any subject matter; and it is not strange that Gorgias was unable to furnish the clear conception that Socrates sought. Socrates, then, had no great difficulty in establishing his own definition, that *rhetoric is the art of persuading an ignorant multitude about the justice or injustice of a matter, without imparting any real instruction*. Rhetoric is most powerful with the ignorant many, because the rhetorician, as rhetorician, does not really know what he is talking about, he only appears to know; and the appearance is persuasive only with the ignorant. Plato here limits rhetoric to the discussion of matters concerning justice. He probably chose to discuss the forensic rather than the deliberative or epideictic rhetoric because the contemporary rhetoricians devoted most of their attention to it.

Socrates also compels Gorgias to admit that *rhetoricians do not really know their business*, for they do not teach their pupils about justice and injustice (an essential part of rhetoric, by the definition previously established). The actions of the pupils show that they have never learned to know justice—any rhetorician must admit that his pupils often act unjustly. Two things are to be noted about this argument. Gorgias and Socrates have different ideas of what it means to know justice. Gorgias means by it a sufficient practical knowledge of men and affairs to know what is conventionally moral in any given case. Socrates, on the other hand, means abstract, philosophical knowledge of the nature of justice. There is also underlying the argument the “vicious intellectualism” of Socrates. The Platonic Gorgias fails to object to the Socratic thesis that if students of rhetoric knew the nature of justice, they would never commit an injustice. To Gorgias the teaching of justice was not a heavy responsibility, because the just or unjust actions of his pupils did not depend upon any ethical theories taught by him. The just rhetorician was just because he sought to live in a manner which his common sense told him would win the approval of his fellow men, and not because he had been taught to be virtuous.¹ It is difficult to

¹ See *Meno*, 95.

believe that the real Gorgias would have been so easily entrapped by the argument that the injustices committed by pupils of the rhetoricians proved the ignorance of the teachers.

Polus indignantly attempts to rescue his master, but he also falls an easy victim to the Socratic dialectic. Since both Gorgias and Polus have been more apt at praising rhetoric than at defining it, Socrates proceeds to attack their claims and to establish the point that *rhetoric is not of much use in the world*. There are four arguments to substantiate this: (1) Rhetoric is not an art; (2) Rhetoric does not confer power; (3) Rhetoric as a protection against suffering wrong is of little importance; and (4) Rhetoric as a means of escaping a deserved punishment is not to be commended. The philosophy developed in support of these points loses little of its significance when separated from its immediate purpose of refuting the claims of rhetoric; but the unity of the dialogue is not perceived until it is understood that the philosophical theses are part of a consistent argumentative plan.

Rhetoric was not an art, Plato believed, because it did not rest on universal principles. It was really only a knack, a routine, or experience. Aiming at persuasion, it cared only for appearance. It did not aim at justice, but only at a semblance of justice. By an art, Plato meant more nearly what we should call a science, that is, a body of knowledge organized on universally valid principles. The dispute as to whether or not rhetoric was an art was of great practical significance to the rhetoricians. If it was not an art, and rested upon no principles, then the attempt to teach it must be futile. There has always been considerable scepticism as to the possibility of teaching rhetoric profitably. Its rules have often been multiplied in order to have something more to teach. Plato, in common with other writers of genius, was fond of minimizing the importance of technique, just as teachers as a class are fond of overemphasizing it.

Aside from the immediately practical effect upon the teaching of the subject, it was injurious to the prestige of rhetoric to deny it a scientific character. As Gomperz observes of the age:

All the business of mankind, from cooking a dinner to painting a picture, from going a walk to waging a war, was guided by rules and, wherever possible, reduced to principles.¹

¹ *Op. cit.*, I, 386.

Plato's charge that rhetoric was not an art, then, was somewhat analogous to the denial of a place among the sciences to sociology or psychology. Such a charge, even if unaccompanied by any implications concerning the doubtful morality of persuading ignorant multitudes, was enough to injure the subject.

In denying that rhetoric is an art, Plato gives it a place among the pseudo-arts. In the hierarchy of arts and pseudo-arts, the higher arts aim at the production, real or apparent, of permanent conditions; the lower, at the removal, real or apparent, of temporary derangements. Sophistry is distinguished from rhetoric and placed above it. Sophistry is an imitation of the statesman's art, which is higher than the art of the pleader, because the pleader only remedies miscarriages of justice, while the statesman has the opportunity to create permanent institutions which give society an organization based upon justice. We probably agree today in paying more honor to the statesman than to the trial lawyer. In the *Gorgias*, the sophist is the sham statesman; the rhetorician is the pleader who "makes the worse appear the better reason," and forgets justice in the winning of his case.

The second argument against rhetoric in the dialogue with Polus is that rhetoric, in spite of appearances, does not really confer power. People who do not know, in the philosophical sense (and Plato believed that very few could know anything in the philosophical sense), what is really good for them, have no power, for they are unable to do what they will. When they do evil, they are not doing what they will, for no one really wills to do evil; he only makes a mistake in the art of measuring. The Socratic belief that no man errs voluntarily is again the basis of the argument. The minor premise, that rhetoricians have not the philosophical insight to know what is really good for them, Plato believes may safely be assumed.

The third and fourth assertions about rhetoric which Socrates established against Polus gain significance when considered in relation to the conditions of Athenian court procedure. With a jury of five hundred—somewhat predisposed to convict any wealthy man, since his goods would be at the disposal of the state—innocent persons were liable to be convicted on the flimsiest of charges. The size of the jury made oratory a much more important matter than evidence. This would make it quite as possible for the guilty to escape punishment, as for an innocent man to suffer at the hands of

his enemies. Any practical-minded person would therefore conclude that rhetoric was of great importance to the innocent as a protection against injury, and to the guilty as a means of avoiding a just penalty. Socrates, however, denies both of these claims, and advances his famous paradoxes in support of his argument. Rhetoric is not of great importance as a protection against suffering wrong; the really important thing is to keep oneself from doing wrong, for doing wrong is a greater evil than suffering wrong. The dialectic by which Socrates establishes this is hardly as noble as the conclusion which he reaches, but Polus is not able to offer any effective opposition. Again, rhetoric as a means of escaping punishment is of no great service, for the man who is punished for his injustice is happier than he who is not punished. This Socratic thesis is a matter of feeling and belief rather than of logical proof, but against Polus it was not difficult to establish dialectically. If it is honorable to inflict punishment on a guilty person, then it must be honorable to receive it. Punishment, as a deliverance of the soul from evil, should be welcomed by the guilty as a medicine.

When Polus seems to be hopelessly defeated, Callicles takes up the argument. In the discussion with him the argument turns more directly to the contrast of philosophy and rhetoric as ways of life. In the words of Socrates:

We are arguing about the way of human life; and what question can be more serious than this to a man who has any sense at all: whether he should follow after that way of life to which you exhort me, and truly fulfill what you call the manly part of speaking in the assembly, and cultivating rhetoric, and engaging in public affairs, after your manner; or whether he should pursue the life of philosophy, and in what this differs from the other.¹

Callicles vigorously attacks philosophy, upholds rhetoric, and offers in its support the doctrine that might makes right, that justice is but an artificial convention invented by the many weak to protect themselves against the few strong, that the law of nature decrees that the strong should take what they can get, and that in a society full of conventions, rhetoric offers the strong man the means of getting what he wants. The Socratic argument in reply to this passes into the realm of ethics, and deals with the self-seeker as such, rather than merely with the rhetorician.

Socrates is disposed to admit that there might conceivably be a

¹*Gorgias*, 500.

true and noble art of rhetoric. The true rhetorician would attempt to improve the people, rather than to please them. He would attempt this, not only for the moral benefit of the people, but also because any process which does not improve souls is not really an art; it is an ignoble flattery. Among such flatteries are music, poetry, drama, and painting. They may occasionally improve the people, but for the most part they are to be viewed with distrust.

Although there might be a noble rhetoric, and true rhetoricians, none such have ever existed. All statesmen and rhetoricians of the past, even the best, such as Themistocles, Cimon, Miltiades, and Pericles, have failed to make the citizens any better.¹ The proof of this is that the citizens treated these men very ungratefully and unjustly, which they would not have done if they had been taught justice by the statesmen. The professional teachers of rhetoric, even though the teaching of justice should be a part of the instruction in rhetoric, dare not trust their own pupils to treat them justly, for they exact a fee instead of leaving it to the pupil's sense of honor.

Socrates is further offended at the pretentiousness of rhetoric and rhetoricians. If rhetoric occasionally saves a life in courts of law, there are other life-saving arts which are equally important, and much more modest. A swimmer may save many lives, but he is not likely to boast that he practises the greatest of the arts. Or a pilot, if swimming seems to be a contemptible example, is also a great life-saver. But he keeps his modesty. If he has any philosophy in him, he knows that some of the lives he has saved were probably not worth saving; but a rhetorician never seems to indulge himself in such sobering reflections.

Rhetoric destroys the integrity of a man's soul, for it involves conformity to the ways of the multitude. The philosopher, on the other hand, sees further:

The noble and the good may possibly be something different from saving and being saved, and that he who is truly a man ought not to care about living a certain time; he knows, as women say, that none can escape the day of destiny, and therefore he is not fond of life; he leaves all that with God, and considers in what way he can best spend his appointed term.²

¹ Ælius Aristides, a sophist of the second century A.D., replied to the charges made against rhetoric in the *Gorgias*. One of his discourses is devoted to a defense of the four statesmen here attacked. For a discussion of this see André Boulanger, *Ælius Aristide et la sophistique dans la province d'Asie au II^e siècle de notre ère*, Paris, 1923.

² *Gorgias*, 512.

The dialogue closes with a myth of the after-world, in which the judgment that bestows rewards and punishments is not based upon appearances, as are the judgments won by the rhetoricians, but upon the true nature of the soul. The myth sums up the whole argument of the dialogue. The fundamental contrast is between appearances and reality; the rhetorician deals with appearances, the philosopher with reality.

In the *Gorgias*, the rhetoricians appear to be men bent upon getting on in the world. They seem to believe that an unjust man who escapes punishment, and practises his injustice on such a large scale that he is conspicuously successful, is a man to be envied and imitated. It is easy for us, made familiar with the doctrine that injustice is an evil, through the teachings of Plato, of the Stoics, and of Christianity, and accustomed at least to pay lip-service to it as a truism, to suppose that Plato was upholding the traditional righteousness against a peculiarly corrupt set of public teachers, the sophists and rhetoricians. It should be remembered, however, that public opinion in Athens was not with Plato. Instead of regarding Gorgias and Polus and Callicles as especially corrupt, we should regard Plato as the reforming philosopher, attacking public opinion through its prominent representatives. That Plato himself took this view is shown by his remark in the *Republic* that the youth are not corrupted by individual sophists, but by the public.¹

It is also worthy of note that this attack upon rhetoric is itself a rhetorical triumph. The rhetoricians are ridiculed for their inability to reason closely, and to defend themselves against the dialectic of Socrates; but the triumph of the Platonic Socrates is not a triumph of logic over oratory. John Stuart Mill has put this clearly:

This great dialogue, full of just thoughts and fine observations on human nature, is, in mere argument, one of the weakest of Plato's works. It is not by its logic, but by its *êthos* that it produces its effects; not by instructing the understanding, but by working on the feelings and imagination. Nor is this strange; for the disinterested love of virtue is an affair of feeling. It is impossible to prove to any one Plato's thesis, that justice is supreme happiness, unless he can be made to feel it as such. The external inducements which recommend it he may be taught to appreciate; the favorable regards and good offices of other people, and the rewards of another life. These considerations, however, though Plato has recourse to them in other places,

¹ *Republic*, 493.

are not available in the *Gorgias*. . . . It is the picture of the moral hero, still *tenax propositi* against the hostility and contempt of the world, which makes the splendor and power of the *Gorgias*. The Socrates of the dialogue makes us *feel* all other evils to be more tolerable than injustice in the soul, not by proving it, but by the sympathy he calls forth with his own intense feeling of it. He inspires heroism because he shows himself a hero. And his failures in logic do not prevent the step marked by the *Gorgias* from being one of the greatest ever made in moral culture.¹

VII

The *Phædrus*, which has been described as a dramatized treatise on rhetoric, contains three speeches upon the general subject of love; one of which Plato introduces as the work of Lysias, a noted rhetorician of the day, and two of which are put into the mouth of Socrates. It is in a comparison of these speeches that Plato's ideas about rhetoric are expressed. At the close of the final speech upon love, delivered by Socrates, Phædrus expresses his admiring approval; he fears that Lysias, whose speech he had just read to Socrates, could not produce anything as good;² indeed, he had already been reproached for his speech writing. Socrates remarks that it is not writing speeches, but writing them badly, that is disgraceful. This opens the way for a discussion of the entire practice of speaking and writing.

Socrates enunciates as the first rule of good speaking:

The mind of the speaker should know the truth of what he is going to say. . . . There never is nor ever will be a real art of speaking which is unconnected with the truth.³

This rule of Socrates is contrasted with the prevalent conception of rhetoric. Rhetoric is usually considered to be an "art of enchanting the mind by arguments"; it has no concern with the nature of truth or justice, but only with opinions about them. Rhetoric draws its persuasive power, not from truth, but from harmony with public opinion. This conception of rhetoric, however, Plato thinks inadequate. The objection here is not, as is often stated, from high moral motives. In the *Gorgias* and elsewhere it is stated that the

¹ *Op. cit.*, IV, 291, 292.

² Plato had no doubt that a philosopher could easily outdo a rhetorician at his own art. He wrote the *Menexenus* in order to satirize the conventional funeral oration and to show how easily a philosopher could dash off such a speech.

³ *Phædrus*, 259.

genuine rhetorician must be a true and just man. And from many sources we know how Plato abhorred the "lie in the soul." But here the ground is simple expediency. The art of persuasion is the art of winning the mind by resemblances. The speaker goes by degrees from that which is accepted to that which he wishes accepted, proceeding from one resemblance to another. If the difference between two resemblances is small, there is an excellent opportunity for making the audience believe that one is the other.

This rule that "the mind of the speaker should know the truth of what he is going to say" and not "catch at appearances," may seem to be a commonplace. But it is not mere faithfulness to fact that Plato has in mind; it is that Truth which only philosophers know. All others dwell in a darkened cave.¹ The moving figures they behold are not realities; they are shadows, phantoms. Only the philosopher has ascended into the clear light of day. Only he has beheld Ideas in their Absolute form. Only he it is who is able to see "unity and plurality in nature." Hence the exclamation of Socrates:

Come out, children of my soul, and convince Phædrus, who is the father of similar beauties, that he will never be able to speak about anything unless he be trained in philosophy.²

These Platonic conceptions are not new to Phædrus, and no time is wasted in explaining them. Having secured acceptance of the first rule of good speaking, Socrates proceeds to lay down two corollaries. First, rhetoric has greater power in discussions where men disagree and are most likely to be deceived. The rhetorician ought therefore to have in mind a clear distinction between debatable and nondebatable subjects. Secondly, particulars must be carefully observed, so that they may be properly classified. In other words, careful definitions must be drawn, and mere matters of opinion separated from matters of scientific knowledge.

A lack of any definition of the subject of love is the first criticism of the speech of Lysias. This is particularly reprehensible as love is used in two different senses. Socrates, however, was careful in both speeches to start from a definition of the love he was treating. Again, there is no principle of order in the speech of Lysias. He is accused of beginning at the end, and his topics follow one another in a random fashion.

¹ *Republic*, VII, 515.

² *Phædrus*, 261.

I cannot help fancying that he wrote off freely just what came into his head. . . . Every discourse ought to be a living creature, having its own body and head and feet; there ought to be a middle, beginning, and end, which are in a manner agreeable to one another and to the whole.¹

From this study of the speeches on love, two fundamental principles of composition emerge:

First, the comprehension of scattered particulars in one idea; the speaker defines his several notions in order that he may make his meaning clear. . . . Secondly, there is the faculty of division according to the natural ideas or members, not breaking any part as a bad carver might.²

But these processes of generalization and division, which the speech of the famous rhetorician failed to employ, are principles that Socrates has hitherto held to belong to dialectic, and not to rhetoric.

I am a great lover of these processes of division and generalization; they help me to speak and think. And if I find any man who is able to see unity and plurality in nature, him I follow, and walk in his steps as if he were a god. And those who have this art, I have hitherto been in the habit of calling dialecticians.³

Phædrus acknowledges that these principles rightly belong to the dialecticians, but persists in inquiring about the principles of rhetoric; he mentions a number of prominent rhetoricians together with some characteristic elements of their systems. Socrates admits that in addition to the really fundamental principles of composition to be found in dialectic, there may be in rhetoric some "niceties of the art." Theodorus, Evenus, Tisias, Gorgias, Prodicus, Hippias, Polus, Protagoras, and the other rhetoricians spend much time upon proems, statements of fact, witnesses, proofs, probabilities, confirmations, superconfirmations, refutations, diplasiology, gnomology, and other technicalities. These theories and practices of the rhetoricians, however, are not really principles of the art of rhetoric. They are mere preliminaries, as the tuning of strings is preliminary to playing upon an instrument. But no one would call the tuning of strings the art of music. The contemporary rhetoricians have no more real claim to be practitioners of the art than a man who knows a few drugs, but does not know how to use them, could claim to be a physician.

¹ *Phædrus*, 264.

² *Phædrus*, 265.

³ *Phædrus*, 266.

Since all these teachings of the rhetoricians are not true principles of the art, and are altogether useless except when used in conjunction with the principles of dialectic, Socrates proceeds to give what might be called an outline of a true art of rhetoric.

Oratory is the art of enchanting the soul, and therefore he who would be an orator has to learn the differences of human souls—they are of so many and of such a nature, and from them come the differences between man and man. He will then proceed to divide speeches into their several different classes. Such and such persons, he will say, are affected by this or that kind of speech in this or that way, and he will tell you why; he must have a theoretical notion of them first, and then he must see them in action, and be able to follow them with all his senses about him, or he will never get beyond the precepts of his masters. But when he is able to say what persons are persuaded by what arguments and recognize the individual about whom he used to theorize as actually present to himself, This is he and this is the sort of man who ought to have that argument applied to him in order to convince him of this; when he has attained the knowledge of all this, and knows also when he should speak and when he should abstain from speaking, when he should make use of pithy sayings, pathetic appeals, aggravated effects, and all the other figures of speech, when, I say, he knows the times and seasons of all these things, then, and not until then, is he perfect and a consummate master of his art.¹

Such an outline of rhetoric, Socrates feels, may be discouraging to the young Phædrus. The road to the mastery of such an art is obviously long and hard. The sophists, on the other hand, are represented by Plato as offering promises to impart culture quickly and easily.² Here, then, is an opportunity for Socrates to compare the true way of mastering the art of rhetoric with the sophistic short cut. The rhetoricians succeed in imparting a certain skill in making plausible speeches because they content themselves with creating an appearance of probability. They teach that "in speaking the orator should run after probability and say good-by to truth."³ The teaching of Tisias on the topic of probability, which enabled a man quickly to make a case either for the defense or the prosecution, regardless of the evidence, is cited as typical of the rhetoricians. To show the superiority of the true rhetoric over such trickery, Socrates repeats his former statement:

¹ *Phædrus*, 271.

² For a later, satirical development of this idea, see Lucian, "The Rhetorician's Vade Mecum," *Works of Lucian*, tr. H. W. and F. G. Fowler, Oxford, 1905, III.

³ *Phædrus*, 273.

Probability is engendered in the minds of the many by the likeness of the truth, and he who knows the truth will always know best how to discover the resemblance of the truth.¹

The rhetoric of Tisias, then, is deficient in two respects. First, it is not even effective, for it is not quick at perceiving likenesses of truth; and secondly, such a rhetorician is as likely to deceive himself as his audience. Further, the true rhetorician masters his art after much labor:

Not for the sake of speaking and acting before men, but in order that he may be able to say what is acceptable to God and in all things to act acceptably to Him so far as in him lies.²

Rhetoric, then, like all the arts, is to be an instrument of righteousness. After stating that enough has been said of the true and false art of rhetoric, Socrates feels that something remains to be said of the propriety and impropriety of writing. He proceeds to speak of writing, but only to condemn the practice.³ Concerning the inven-

¹ *Phædrus*, 273.

² *Phædrus*, 273.

³ Scholars have commented variously and at length on this attitude of Plato toward the art of writing. Schleiermacher (*Introduction to the Dialogues of Plato*, tr. William Dobson, London, 1836, p. 67) argues from this attitude that the *Phædrus* was written in Plato's early youth. Such contempt for writing, he thinks, is inconceivable in a man who has already written very much. Lutoslawski (*Origin and Growth of Plato's Logic*, London, 1897, ch. 6) insists that Plato did not despise writing in general, but only bad writing, and the cult of mere literary erudition which substitutes opinion for knowledge, and leads men to put all their attention on the form, making it impossible to have a clear view of general ideas. Lutoslawski has an ingenious explanation of the passages which at the close of so wonderful a piece of writing seem to condemn writing. In Plato's time, and in his own opinion, oral teaching stood very much higher than written handbooks. Plato was very proud of his own eloquence. The purpose of these passages, therefore, is to raise the reader's expectation to the highest pitch by announcing that this beautiful sample of written eloquence is nothing compared with his oral teaching.

A different view is taken by S. H. Butcher in an essay entitled "The Written and Spoken Word" (*Some Aspects of the Greek Genius*, London, 1893). He cites the *Phædrus* in asserting that the Greek dislike for writing was general. In proof of this thesis he offers arguments which may be summarized as follows: (1) The Greeks gave a very cold reception to the discovery of letters; for centuries they employed it, not as a vehicle of thought, but almost wholly for memorial purposes, such as registering treaties and commercial contracts, preserving the names of Olympic victors, and fixing boundaries. (2) They shrank from formulæ; unvarying rules petrified action. To reduce laws to writing was to kill the spirit and exalt the letter. (3) Writing was inartistic, as the letters conveyed no images. (4) The Greeks had a high conception of the dignity of knowledge. True knowledge is not among the marketable wares, that can be carried about in a portable shape in

tion of letters he cites a myth in which the prophecy is made that the art of writing will create forgetfulness and a pretense of wisdom. Contrasted with this futility of writing is "an intelligent writing which is graven in the soul of him who has learned, and can defend itself, and knows when to speak and when to be silent."¹ This expression of opinion about writing concludes Plato's theory of rhetoric as found in the *Phædrus*.

That these suggestions of Plato for the organization of rhetoric into a scientific body of knowledge may be more clearly in mind when we come to contrast the *Phædrus* with Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, we shall here summarize them.

1. "The first rule of good speaking is that the mind of the speaker should know the truth of what he is going to say." This cannot be interpreted as an injunction to speak the truth at all times. It is rather to *know* the truth in order (a) to be persuasive by presenting to the audience something which at least resembles truth, and (b) to avoid being oneself deceived by probabilities. In order to know the truth, the rhetorician must be a philosopher.

2. The rhetorician must define his terms, and see clearly what subjects are debatable and what are not. He must also be able to classify particulars under a general head, or to break up universals into particulars. The rhetorician, then, must be a logician.

3. Principles of order and arrangement must be introduced. "Every discourse ought to be a living creature, having its own body and head and feet; there ought to be a middle, beginning, and end, which are in a manner agreeable to one another and to the whole."

4. The nature of the soul must be shown, and after having "arranged men and speeches, and their modes and affections in different classes, and fitted them into one another, he will point out the connection between them—he will show why one is naturally persuaded by a particular form of argument, and another not." In other words, the rhetorician must be a psychologist.

5. The rhetorician must "speak of the instruments by which the soul acts or is affected in any way." Here we have the division under which comes practically all of rhetoric when viewed more narrowly and technically. The "instruments" by which rhetoric affects the soul are style and delivery. Plato believed style to be acquired, however, as Pericles acquired it, by "much discussion and lofty contemplation of nature."

6. The art of writing will not be highly regarded; nor will continuous and uninterrupted discourse be regarded as equal to cross-examination as a

books, and emptied from them into the mind of the learner. True knowledge is a hard-won possession, personable and inalienable. "Much learning does not teach wisdom," was a saying of Heraclitus, and even Aristotle declared that "much learning produces confusion."

For a further account of Plato's aversion to writing see Grote's *Plato*, I, 358.

¹*Phædrus*, 276.

means of instruction. This is Plato's way of saying that any method of attempting to persuade multitudes must suffer from the very fact that it is a multitude which is addressed, and that the best of rhetoric is unequal to philosophic discussion.

7. The rhetorician will have such a high moral purpose in all his work that he will ever be chiefly concerned about saying that which is "acceptable to God." Rhetoric, then, is not an instrument for the determination of scientific truth, nor for mere persuasion regardless of the cause; it is an instrument for making the will of God prevail. The perfect rhetorician, as a philosopher, knows the will of God.

VIII

De Quincey says that rhetoric has, in general, two connotations: one of ostentatious ornament, and the other of fallacious argument. That part of Plato's attack upon rhetoric which we have considered, largely concerns itself with rhetoric as "ostentatious ornament" (although the two aspects can seldom be completely separated). And it was this attack which led Plato to the constructive theory of the *Phædrus*. But there was a later assault upon the sophists which concerned rhetoric as an art of fallacious argument.¹ The sophists of Plato's earlier dialogues are declaimers and rhetoricians who can overwhelm opponents with long speeches, but they are tyros in the art of argumentation. In the *Euthydemus*, *Sophist*, and *Statesman*, Plato caricatures the imitators of Socrates, who practise argumentation by question and answer, but who resemble Socrates as the wolf does the dog.

The *Euthydemus* is the earliest known attempt to exhibit a variety of fallacies. In it Plato desired to make clear the distinction between truly philosophical argumentation and that eristical disputation which served no purpose except to display a certain type of cleverness. A young man, Cleinias, is cross-examined by two sophistical teachers of argument, Euthydemus and Dionysodorus. They conduct their examination in a spirit of horse-play, and soon have the youth hopelessly confused. Socrates then rebukes them, and offers to examine Cleinias in a truly philosophical fashion. His kindly questions (much more kindly here than in other dialogues, but they serve Plato's purpose in emphasizing the contrast), which lead Cleinias to the conclusion that wisdom is the only good, and ignorance the only

¹ Henry Sidgwick in his essays on the sophists was the first to point out this distinction. See his *Lectures on the Philosophy of Kant and other Philosophical Lectures and Essays*. For a discussion of Sidgwick's essays, see Sir A. Grant, *The Ethics of Aristotle*, Essay 2.

evil, are an example of the way in which a philosopher conducts an argument—for the enlightenment, and not the confusion, of youth.

Having distinguished the philosopher from the sophistical teachers of fallacious argument, Plato in an epilogue contrasts the philosopher and the orator-statesman. Here Plato is probably thinking of Isocrates and his "philosophy," which was a mixture of rhetoric and politics. Philosopher-politicians and speech writers, Socrates is made to say, imagine themselves to be a superior sort; they think they have a certain amount of philosophy, and a certain amount of political insight; thus they keep out of the way of all risks and conflicts and reap the fruit of their wisdom. Socrates asserts, however, that philosophy and political action tend to such different ends that one who participates in both achieves little in either. The Isocratean ideal of the orator-statesman, which had so great an influence upon Cicero, was objectionable to Plato for at least three reasons. In the first place, the true statesman was a philosopher rather than an orator; he ruled arbitrarily through his wisdom rather than through persuasion. Secondly, if the statesman was forced to stoop to the use of oratory, it was to be clearly understood that oratory was a subordinate instrument. The ideal of the orator-statesman only helped to confuse the superior art of politics with rhetoric. Thirdly, the orator-statesman falsely imagined that the ideas which he used in the persuasion of the public constituted his philosophy; whereas in reality he was so tied to particulars in all his speaking and thinking that he never approached the wisdom of the true philosopher.

In the *Euthydemus*, then, we have pictured a later development of the older sophists. Imitators of Socrates had appeared who taught the art of argumentation for pay: Isocrates had enlarged and dignified the instruction of the rhetoricians by allying it more closely with pan-Hellenic politics, and had become much more popular and successful than Plato. Plato insists that true philosophy is a different sort of thing, and indulges in caricature and satire to make it evident.

In the *Sophist*, we have an abstract and methodical discussion of that which is dramatically pictured in the *Euthydemus*. Plato planned a trilogy of dialogues, the *Sophist*, the *Statesman*, and the *Philosopher*, in which the man of the world and the man of wisdom should be contrasted. The *Philosopher* was never written, but from the *Sophist* and the *Statesman* we get the Platonic discussion of the false art of argumentation known as eristic.

The sophist, in the dialogue of that name, is discovered by a preliminary study of the angler, which suggests a method of search, and also furnishes an implied analogy, for the sophist is found to be a fisher of men who finally destroys them. By a series of homely figures the sophist is revealed in his various aspects. He is (1) a paid hunter after youth and wealth, (2) a retail merchant or trader in the goods of the soul, (3) he himself manufactures the learned wares which he sells, (4) he is a hero of dispute, having distinctly the character of a disputant, (5) he is a purger of souls who clears away notions obstructive to knowledge. In the last-named characteristic, Plato seems about to admit that the sophist serves a great educational purpose, for he has previously admitted that "refutation is the greatest and chiefest purification." But the sophist, as the supposed minister of refutation, is related to the real purger of souls as "a wolf, who is the fiercest of animals, is to the dog, who is the gentlest."¹ Here Plato does not seem to see that a given logical procedure is as a method essentially the same, whether used by a sophist or a philosopher. For Plato, even the *logical* nature of cross-examination seems to be changed by the *moral* nature of the examiner. No sophist ever employed greater fallacies than the Socrates of the Platonic dialogues; yet fallacies in the arguments of a philosopher seemed somehow elevated by their moral purpose. Aristotle followed Plato in this error. Probably no fallacy is more persistent than the judgment of logical method by the standard of moral purpose.

The eristical sophists, as the rhetorical, profess a knowledge which they do not have. They profess that the art of disputation is a power of disputing about all things. Plato puts the sophists in the position of teaching that a mastery of form gives also a mastery of substance. The sophists delight in the discovery that a certain facility in logical method, accompanied by entire unscrupulousness, can make almost any proposition appear to be plausible. With no standard of consistency looking farther than the immediate discussion, method can so arrange any small group of facts, or alleged facts, that any thesis may be made to appear tenable. The sophists *seem* to teach young men to argue about all things because "they make young men believe in their own supreme and universal wisdom." They are enabled to do this by their readiness in offering

¹ *Sophist*, 231.

"conjectural or apparent knowledge of all things," as a substitute for truth. They are like painters who profess "by one art to make all things."¹ What the sophist makes is a resemblance, but it is easy to deceive the less intelligent children, by showing his pictures at a distance, into believing that he has the absolute power of making what he likes. In the same way there is an imitative art of reasoning, and by the use of this art, the sophist passes himself off as a philosopher. There are two types of these imitators: the popular orator, who makes long speeches to the multitude and who appears to be a statesman, and the sophist, who teaches argumentation and pretends to be a philosopher.

The *Statesman* is an attempt, by the same method of division used in the *Sophist*, to discover the true statesman. Here we have an introductory analogy concerning the weaver. As the weaver has the auxiliary arts of the fuller, the carder, and the maker of the warp and woof, so the statesman has the auxiliary arts of the rhetorician, the general, and the judge. There is always the danger, however, that the rhetorician may be mistaken for the statesman. Politics is the science that tells us when to persuade, and of what; rhetoric merely tells how to persuade. If the rhetoric be a noble rhetoric, however, and does really persuade men to love justice, it may be regarded as a useful instrument in our second-best state, where persuasion is an unfortunate necessity in government. Rhetoric, however, should never lose its instrumental character, and should never aspire to be more than one of the several subordinate arts which the statesman weaves together into the whole which is the state.

In these two dialogues, then, the *Sophist* and the *Statesman*, we are warned against the rhetorician, who appears in different guises. In the *Sophist*, he appears as the dialectician who purges the soul of false knowledge, but he is really an eristical disputant. In the *Statesman*, he appears as the persuader of the public who is quick to seize power as a demagogue unless he be kept strictly under the direction of the true statesman.

IX

To summarize briefly our whole discussion of Plato: we have shown that his treatment of rhetoric is based upon his feelings

¹ *Sophist*, 233, 234.

toward certain rhetoricians, and upon his dislike of the rhetorical tendency of all Athenian life. Plato never viewed rhetoric abstractly, as an art of composition, as an instrument that might be used or abused; he always considered it a false impulse in human thought. He therefore attacked in published dialogues the more prominent contemporary teachers and the art they professed to teach. The evidence seems to show that the sophists of the earlier attacks were intellectually respectable, and that they made significant contributions to the thought of their time. At the conclusion of his earlier attacks (if we may trust the attempts to arrange Plato's dialogues in approximately chronological order) Plato offers an outline of a reconstructed rhetoric. Here, too, he shows his inability to conceive of rhetoric as a tool; the ideal rhetoric sketched in the *Phædrus* is as far from the possibilities of mankind as his Republic was from Athens. In later life, a new generation of teachers that patterned its methods after Socrates, aroused the wrath of Plato, and he wrote other dialogues to distinguish the false art of argumentation from the dialectical processes of the true philosopher.

X

In turning to Aristotle,¹ we shall be chiefly interested in his relation to Plato. To explain the relation of any one of Aristotle's treatises to Plato is, according to Sir Alexander Grant, almost a sufficient account of what it contains. Familiarity with the Platonic dialogues and their Athenian background, makes it possible to proceed more rapidly with the systematic work of Aristotle upon any particular subject under investigation. It is not our purpose here to present an exposition of the *Rhetoric*,² and the preceding discussion should make it possible to condense the account of Aristotle, although his contribution to rhetoric is greater than that of Plato or the sophists.

It is obvious that as Plato's pupil, Aristotle must have had his attention called to those aspects of Athenian life which interested

¹ For translations of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, see those by Welldon, London, 1886; Jebb, Cambridge, 1909; and Roberts, in *The Works of Aristotle*, vol. XI, Oxford, 1924. Citations of the *Rhetoric* in this study are taken from Roberts.

² For expositions of the *Rhetoric*, see E. M. Cope, *An Introduction to Aristotle's Rhetoric*, London, 1867; Gomperz, *op. cit.*, IV; Zeller, *Aristotle and the Earlier Peripatetics*, London 1897; and Baldwin, *Ancient Rhetoric and Poetic*, New York, 1924.

his master. As a reader of Plato's dialogues, Aristotle found a wealth of concretely pictured material ready for classification into various compartments of knowledge. Aside from the magnificent gesture of the *Phædrus*, Plato apparently gave little constructive thought to rhetoric. He did not teach its practice, nor lecture upon its theory. Aristotle, however, during the first period of residence at Athens, and while still a pupil of Plato at the Academy, opened a school of rhetoric in competition with Isocrates. We have here an instance of the way in which rhetoric in Athens, as in other times and places, has offered men whose minds could not be confined to a single field, an opportunity to establish themselves as teachers and thinkers. The works upon rhetoric which have been lost were probably composed during this earlier period. There seem to be adequate grounds for attributing three such works to Aristotle: a history of rhetoric, a dialogue upon the subject, named for Gryllus, a son of Xenophon, and the *Theodectea*, mainly devoted to style, composition, and arrangement, and which probably contained in greater detail the subject matter of the third book of the extant *Rhetoric*.¹ It is not known when the *Rhetoric* was composed, but it was not published until Aristotle's second period of residence and teaching in Athens (336 B.C. is the most generally accepted date of publication). It is believed that the third book, which deals with style and arrangement, was not written until some time after the first two books. The *Poetics* was written before the third book of the *Rhetoric*, but probably after the earlier books. From this it is sometimes inferred that Aristotle's interest in style as a part of rhetoric was of late development. This is hardly consistent with his earlier treatment of the subject in the *Theodectea*. A more probable explanation of the greater interest which Aristotle seems to have felt in the subject of proofs and their sources is that this part of rhetoric represented most distinctly his own contribution to the subject. In writing of style and arrangement he was dealing with questions already fully treated by many writers, for most of whom he had little regard. In the first two books, however, he was organizing a new unity out of material drawn from logic, psychology, ethics, and politics. It may have been an additional source of pleasure to him to be able to draw from his own treatment of these special fields such material as was

¹ See Cope's *Introduction to Aristotle's Rhetoric*, section entitled "Aristotle's Lost Works on Rhetoric."

needed to give rhetoric a more philosophical character. It is significant that Aristotle, having taught rhetoric in his early youth, and having waged war with both preceding and contemporary rhetoricians, should, in his age, after having surveyed all the fields of knowledge, return to the treatment of the same subject. It seems to be one of the ironies of history that that portion of rhetoric which was most particularly his own, and which owed most to his previous work in other fields, should be forever slipping back into its component parts of logic, psychology, ethics, and politics; and that style and arrangement, regarded by both himself and Plato as mere preliminaries to the art, rather than the art itself, should fix more permanently the character of rhetoric.

XI

While Aristotle agreed with Plato in his contempt for the unscientific nature of the instruction given by other teachers of rhetoric,¹ and in applying the term sophist to false pretenders to knowledge,² his approach to rhetoric was affected by certain philosophical and temperamental divergences from Plato. It is an oft-quoted remark of Friedrich Schlegel's that every man is born either a Platonist or an Aristotelian. This is generally interpreted to mean that the tribe of Platonists are poets and mystics, seeking a truth above the truth of scientific knowledge, while the Aristotelians rely upon methodical experience and classified observations. It cannot be said that Aristotle paid greater attention than Plato to the facts of experience in the creation of a philosophical rhetoric, for he constructed the entire art from the general principles of dialectic, psychology, and ethics, referring to any existing examples of eloquence only most casually for the sake of illustration. But it is, perhaps, a safe generalization to say that Plato sought to reform life, while Aristotle was more interested in reorganizing theory about life. For this reason Aristotle's *Rhetoric* is largely detached from both morality and pedagogy. It is neither a manual of rules nor a collection of injunctions. It is an unmoral and scientific analysis of the means of persuasion.

We have seen that Plato was predisposed to feel a contempt for rhetoric and rhetoricians by certain of his political ideas—his belief

¹ See the concluding section of the *Sophistici Elenchi*; also the first chapter of the *Rhetoric*.

² *Sophistici Elenchi*, ch. I; and ch. I of the *Rhetoric*.

in a government of philosophers, administered by experts; his desire for a permanent stratification of society, free from attempts of men to rise out of their class; and his profound contempt for public opinion. Aristotle had no enthusiasm for what has been called Plato's "pedantocracy." He realized that expert knowledge and professional training have their limitations, and that in political matters the judgment of the people may be superior to that of those who have special knowledge.¹ Although Aristotle shared Plato's belief that a laborer could hardly possess a virtue which should entitle him to citizenship, he never expected ranks and classes to be permanently fixed, as in the *Republic*. In the *Politics* he suggests that final power should rest with the multitude, which, of course, would make rhetoric a universal political instrument. And Aristotle's attitude toward public opinion—the common sense of the majority—is distinctly different from that of Plato. This is most marked, perhaps, in his *Ethics*,² although it is difficult to distinguish ethical from political thinking in the speculation of the period. But one impulse which set Plato to writing was his intense dissatisfaction with the empirical and prudential morality of his countrymen. The constant contrast in his dialogues is between unreflective, chaotic public opinion, and reasoned, philosophic knowledge. He did not care to organize public opinion, subject it to definitions, and extract from it its modicum of truth. The mind must not only reason about the good; it must contemplate the Idea of the Good in the heavens above until conformed to it. Aristotle attacked the Platonic doctrine of ideas, separated ethics from metaphysics, and took as his guiding principle a practical good, happiness. In discussing happiness, Aristotle did not limit himself to the doctrines of the philosophers; he often accepted generally received opinions, and where he rejected them he at least paid them the honor of refutation. The lists and divisions of goods presented in the *Ethics* were largely derived from current Athenian discussion, and many ideas which Aristotle accepts as authoritative were common property. In the *Topics*,³ when he discusses the uses of dialectic, he explicitly recognizes the value of a wide acquaintance with public

¹ *Politics*, 1282.

² For the contribution of public opinion to Aristotle's *Ethics*, see Burnet's introduction to his edition of the work, London, 1900. See also L. H. G. Greenwood's essay, "Dialectic Method in the Sixth Book," in his edition of the sixth book of the *Ethics*, Cambridge, 1909. Sir A. Grant's *Ethics of Aristotle* is also useful in this connection.

³ See Grote's *Aristotle*, London, 1872, for an exposition of the *Topics*.

opinion. There was little danger that a Socrates, discoursing freely in the market place with any one he chanced upon, would be unfamiliar with the beliefs of "the man in the street." But the growth of schools, the habit of scientific study, and the production of written compositions tended to make of the philosopher a man apart. Aristotle recognized the dangerous effect of this upon the public influence of the learned; he recommended the practice of dialectical discussion as a means of keeping in touch with the opinions of men. He himself drew up a collection of current proverbs. Even his more scientific works have been criticized for his willingness to accept common opinion where accurate observation was called for. We may say, then, that Aristotle approached the subject of rhetoric with a belief in its necessity as a political instrument, and a conviction that both the trained thinker and the multitude would benefit by making a common stock of their wisdom for the guidance of the state.

XII

The effect of these philosophical divergences upon the treatment of rhetoric becomes clearly evident when we compare the Platonic discussion between Gorgias and Socrates on the nature and functions of rhetoric with the statements upon the same subject in the early part of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. Aristotle states clearly what Gorgias seemed to be groping for, and unmistakably sides with Gorgias against Plato in practically all controverted points. In the *Gorgias*, Socrates asserts that teachers of rhetoric know nothing of justice, and that the art of rhetoric is inimical to justice. Aristotle, in the first chapter of the *Rhetoric*, expresses his belief that rhetoric makes for the prevalence of truth and righteousness.

Rhetoric is useful because things that are true and things that are just have a natural tendency to prevail over their opposites, so that if the decisions of judges are not what they ought to be, the defeat must be due to the speakers themselves, and they must be blamed accordingly. . . . Further, we must be able to employ persuasion, just as strict reasoning can be employed, on opposite sides of a question, not in order that we may in practice employ it both ways (for we must not make people believe what is wrong), but in order that we may see clearly what the facts are, and that, if another man argues unfairly, we may on our part be able to confute him. No other of the arts draws opposite conclusions: dialectic and rhetoric alone do this. Both these arts draw opposite conclusions impartially. Nevertheless, the underlying facts do not lend themselves equally well to the contrary views. ✓

No; things that are true and things that are better are, by their nature, practically always easier to believe in.¹

It is worthy of note that Aristotle, although he does remark parenthetically that the rhetorician should not make people believe what is wrong, does not base his faith in the benefits of rhetoric upon the moral training of the rhetorician, but rather upon the nature of things. Rhetorical effectiveness does not add equally to the strength of a just and an unjust cause. To use an imperfect analogy, we may say, perhaps, that skilful presentation of a just cause strengthens its appeal geometrically, while an unjust cause is aided only arithmetically. The inherent superiority of just and true things is thus increased by the universal use of rhetoric. This is a broader and sounder view than Plato was able to take. As a reformer Plato had no patience with the evils which inevitably accompany all good things. Aristotle is quite cognizant of the evils of rhetoric, but is content that the good shall, on the whole, outweigh it.

And if it be objected that one who uses such power of speech unjustly might do great harm, that is a charge which may be made in common against all good things except virtue, and above all against the things that are most useful, as strength, health, wealth, generalship.²

In the *Gorgias*, Socrates establishes the point that the power of rhetoric is only an apparent power, because it rests upon the ignorance of the multitude addressed. The persuasion of the ignorant many is a rather unseemly occupation for a philosopher. As to the essentially popular function of rhetoric, Aristotle agrees, but without condescension.

Moreover, before some audiences not even the possession of the exactest knowledge will make it easy for what we say to produce conviction. For argument based on knowledge implies instruction, and there are people whom one cannot instruct. Here, then, we must use, as our modes of persuasion and argument, notions possessed by everybody, as we observed in the *Topics* when dealing with the way to handle a popular audience.³

The Platonic Socrates argued against Gorgias and Polus that the persuasion of multitudes was not properly an art at all, but only a knack or routine or experience. The first claim that Aristotle makes for rhetoric is that it may properly be considered as an art.

¹ *Rhetoric*, 1355a.

² *Rhetoric*, 1355b.

³ *Rhetoric*, 1355a.

All men attempt to discuss statements and to maintain them, to defend themselves and attack others. Ordinary people do this at random or through practice and from acquired habit. Both ways being possible, the subject can plainly be handled systematically, for it is possible to inquire the reason why some speakers succeed through practice and others spontaneously; and every one will at once agree that such an inquiry is the function of an art.¹

One of the Platonic reasons for refusing to admit that rhetoric was properly an art was the difficulty of discovering its proper subject-matter. Gorgias is exhibited to us as struggling with this question, and as insisting that persuasive discourse is the proper subject-matter of rhetoric; but when Socrates presses him with analogies from the other arts, and asks him if instruction in music and geometry and arithmetic is not persuasive discourse, Gorgias is unable to make a satisfactory statement. This interested Aristotle; it led him to distinguish between rhetoric and the special sciences, but it did not lead him to deny that rhetoric was a discipline in itself.

Rhetoric may be defined as the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion. This is not the function of any other art. Every other subject can instruct or persuade about its own particular subject-matter; for instance, medicine about what is healthy and unhealthy, geometry about the properties of magnitudes, arithmetic about numbers, and the same is true of the other arts and sciences. But rhetoric we look upon as the power of observing the means of persuasion on almost any subject presented to us; and that is why we say that, in its technical character, it is not concerned with any special or definite class of subjects. . . . The duty of rhetoric is to deal with such matters as we deliberate on without arts or systems to guide us, in the hearing of persons who cannot take in at a glance a complicated argument, or follow a long chain of reasoning. . . . But the more we try to make either dialectic or rhetoric not, what they really are, practical faculties, but sciences, the more we shall inadvertently be destroying their true nature; for we shall be refashioning them and shall be passing into the region of sciences dealing with definite subjects rather than simply with words and forms of reasoning.²

The argumentative purpose of the Socratic thesis in the *Gorgias*, that it is better to suffer wrong than to do it, was to disparage the claim made for rhetoric that it was useful for purposes of defense. Aristotle agrees that a man may well be eulogized for choosing to suffer wrong rather than to do it.³ Such a choice, however, is a moral problem for the individual, and is quite irrelevant to a con-

¹ *Rhetoric*, 1354a.

² *Rhetoric*, 1355b, 1357a, 1359b.

³ *Rhetoric*, 1364b.

sideration of the uses of any art—rhetoric or boxing or generalship. Aristotle insists that the use of speech and reason as a method of protection against injustice is distinctively human.¹

XIII

It is not surprising that Aristotle, as a writer on rhetoric, should disagree with the passionately hostile treatment of his subject in the *Gorgias*. Most writers who have compared the *Rhetoric* with Plato's sketch in the *Phædrus*, content themselves with indicating the similarities of the two works.² Aristotle's indebtedness to Plato is pointed out, and it is suggested that Plato, in lectures or conversation, may have given Aristotle a pretty complete outline for his work. When we consider the specific suggestions of the *Phædrus* for a philosophical rhetoric, however, the differences between the Platonic and the Aristotelian conception of the subject are at least as manifest as the likenesses.

Taking up first the relationship of rhetoric to Truth, we note a wide divergence. Plato held that the rhetorician must know the Truth, because probability was engendered by a likeness to Truth. Here Plato seems hardly consistent with himself, for a public so depraved as Plato felt all multitudes to be, would never care so much for a resemblance to Truth, as for a probability based upon a consonance with its own interests and tastes. Such a probability, however, could not, according to Plato, form the basis for any art.

For Aristotle, however, probability forms the very groundwork of rhetoric. Rhetoric is frankly an art of appearances. Its function is to enable a man to see quickly what are the available means of persuasion *on either side of any proposition*. The whole plan of the *Rhetoric* bears out this conclusion. Consider first the topics, or commonplaces, or, as Roberts translates the term, lines of argument. The topics, according to some critics, represent Aristotle's determined effort to classify the essentially unclassifiable.³ Aristotle himself

¹ *Rhetoric*, 1355b.

² See Lutoslawski, *Origin and Growth of Plato's Logic*, p. 344. Also Gomperz, *op. cit.*, IV, 421. W. H. Thompson, in the introduction to his edition of the *Phædrus*, London, 1868, compares it with the *Rhetoric*, and emphasizes the likenesses of the two works. E. M. Cope recognizes the fundamental difference between Plato and Aristotle on the matter of probability. See the introduction to his edition of the *Gorgias*, London, 1883.

³ For discussions of the topics, see Grote's *Aristotle*; Edward Poste's essays in his translations of Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics*, Oxford, 1850, and

seems hardly clear in his own mind whether the topics were to be regarded as premises or methods of argument, whether they were indicative or imperative. At any rate, they were collections of brief statements with which the rhetorician was to be familiar in order to call to mind immediately all the available arguments for either side of the case. If, for example, a written law is adverse to one's case, one can impugn its authority by an appeal to a higher and more universal law. On the other hand, if the law favors one's case, it can be urged that the attempt to be wiser than the law increases the bad habit of disobeying authority. It is noteworthy that as aids to invention the topics were not axioms, propositions universally true, but were often less than half-truths. For almost any Aristotelian topic, which was to serve as a reminder of or a basis for an argument, another topic could be found which would serve equally well for a contrary argument. The topics, then, constituted a sort of rhetoricians' first aid. They were to assist him in producing immediately, and perhaps without any special knowledge of the subject, a plausible argument upon either side of a debatable proposition.

Additional evidence of the merely contingent and probable nature of rhetoric, as opposed to the Platonic conception, is to be seen in the distinct method of reasoning which Aristotle elaborated for popular persuasion. Realizing, with Plato, that a general audience cannot be *instructed* by close reasoning, but must be *persuaded* by an easier procedure, he substitutes in rhetoric the enthymeme for the syllogism, and the example for the more careful induction of scientific reasoning. The enthymeme was a rhetorical syllogism; that is, a syllogism drawn, not from universal principles belonging to a particular science, but from probabilities in the sphere of human affairs. In proceeding hastily with a subject before an audience, it would usually happen that one of the three members of the formal syllogism would be omitted. Whether or not the essential distinction between the enthymeme and the syllogism is in the merely probable nature of the premises or in the suppression of one of the parts,¹ the enthymeme is to be regarded as the principal method of popular presentation of thought. For the persuasive use of examples (less conclusive but

Sophistici Elenchi; and Cope's *Introduction to Aristotle's Rhetoric*. See also Hoyt H. Hudson, "Can We Modernize the Theory of Invention?" *Quarterly Journal of Speech Education*, VII (1921), 325.

¹On this controverted point, see Cope's *Introduction to Aristotle's Rhetoric*, p. 103 and note. See also De Quincey's essay on Rhetoric.

more persuasive than a logical induction) Aristotle offers the astute advice, "If you put examples first, you must use many; if at the end, even one is enough."¹

A study of the topics, of enthymemes and examples, makes it evident that the rhetorical *processes* of invention and logical formulation were designed for quick plausibility. Turning from processes to *content*, this impression is heightened. For each of the three branches of rhetoric—deliberative, epideictic, and forensic—an outline of the usual subject-matter treated by the speaker is offered. A student of each of the special sciences represented would probably say that Aristotle has given us as the subject-matter of deliberative rhetoric a superficial political science; for epideictic rhetoric a conventional ethics; and for forensic rhetoric a very loose and inexact criminal jurisprudence.

The subjects suggested as the content of deliberative speeches are all much more fully treated in the *Politics*. The *Rhetoric* takes from the *Politics* a brief sketch of political matters upon which speakers must be persuasive. The rhetorician should be familiar with the various forms of government—democracy, oligarchy, aristocracy, monarchy—not that he shall determine which is best, or shall speak as a political philosopher, but in order that he may gain persuasiveness by being able to adapt himself to the political beliefs of his audience. It is, of course, perfectly possible for the student of rhetoric to be a political scientist, as Aristotle himself was, but as a rhetorician his task is to use whatever political commonplaces are most likely to win approval. That Aristotle was fully conscious of the differences between his scientific and his rhetorical treatment of the same subject, is indicated by the statement with which he concludes his section on the forms of government in the *Rhetoric*:

We have also briefly considered the means and methods by which we shall gain a good knowledge of the moral qualities and institutions peculiar to the various forms of government—only, however, to the extent demanded by the present occasion; a detailed account of the subject has been given in the *Politics*.²

The epideictic speaker, as his function is to praise or blame, finds that his subject-matter lies largely in the field of ethics. We have in

¹ *Rhetoric*, 1394a.

² *Rhetoric*, 1366a.

the *Rhetoric*, therefore, a summary view of the needed ethical material—happiness, goods, virtue and vice, wrong-doing and injustice, pleasure, equity, laws, and friendship. These subjects are given a much fuller exposition in the *Ethics*, and some of the rhetorical definitions, notably that of pleasure, are there repudiated. While neither ethics nor politics were exact sciences in Aristotle's eyes, and while he repeatedly insisted that the exactness of the physical sciences should not be expected in them, he nevertheless put forth a much greater effort in those fields than in rhetoric to arrive at conceptions that would bear searching criticism. The ethical conceptions of the *Rhetoric* are the conceptions of the man in the street—current popular notions that would supply the most plausible premises for persuasive speeches.

Aristotle remarks in the opening of the *Rhetoric* that forensic oratory, more than political, is given to unscrupulous practices. But the oratorical jurisprudence which he offers as the material of the forensic speaker would not go far to elevate the argumentation of the courtroom. This section of the rhetoric most clearly indicates that Aristotle's was a scientific and not a moral earnestness; the dialectician is here in the ascendant.

In dealing with the evidence of witnesses, the following are useful arguments. If you have no witnesses on your side, you will argue that the judges must decide from what is probable; that this is meant by "giving a verdict in accordance with one's honest opinion"; that probabilities cannot be bribed to mislead the court; and that probabilities are never convicted of perjury. If you *have* witnesses, and the other man has not, you will argue that probabilities cannot be put on their trial, and that we could do without the evidence of witnesses altogether if we need do no more than balance the pleas advanced on either side. . . . So, clearly, we need never be at a loss for useful evidence.¹

The entire section on forensic rhetoric recognizes that each pleader's loyalty is to his case, and that as a skilful rhetorician he must be quick to discern all the persuasive possibilities of any situation. Aristotle professed a dislike for the business, but once engaged in the classification of arguments he is concerned with rhetorical effectiveness and not with moral justifiability.

The explicit statement which shows that Aristotle regarded rhetoric as an instrument of persuasion quite detached from the

¹ *Rhetoric*, 1376a.

moral nature of the rhetorician, occurs in the third book, in connection with the discussion of delivery.

Besides, delivery is—very properly—not regarded as an elevated subject of inquiry. Still, *the whole business of rhetoric being concerned with appearances*, we must pay attention to the subject of delivery, unworthy though it is, because we cannot do without it.¹

Turning now from the general problem of the relationship of the *Rhetoric* to Platonic Truth, we take up the second of Plato's suggestions in the *Phædrus*, that the rhetorician must be a dialectician, a man who can distinguish between particulars and universals, who can define his terms, and who can distinguish debatable from undebatable questions. With this Aristotle seems to be in agreement. He opens his *Rhetoric* by declaring that it is the counterpart of dialectic. Elsewhere he refers to rhetoric as parallel to, an offshoot or branch of, dialectic.² He also says that the master of dialectic will be the true master of rhetoric. But it is impossible to make clear the relation between dialectic and rhetoric without explaining the Platonic contrast between the two, and the great advance made by Aristotle in relating both of them to demonstrative science.

After all, the sum and substance of Plato's suggestions for rhetoric is that rhetoric, if it is really to be an art, must coincide with philosophy. When Plato said that the rhetorician must be a dialectician, he meant that he must be a philosopher. So far as he differs from the philosopher, he is an impostor; so far as he coincides with him, his art of rhetoric is superseded. But Aristotle gave to the term dialectic such a different significance that it is another thing entirely to say that the rhetorician should be a dialectician. For ✓ Plato, dialectic was the whole process of rational analysis by which the soul was led into the knowledge of Ideas. It had both a positive and a negative aspect. In the earlier dialogues the negative function was most prominent, and the principal contribution which the Socratic dialectic made to the wisdom of those who underwent his cross-examination was to disabuse them of their false knowledge. As Plato developed his own doctrine of Ideas, dialectic became the instrument of awakening by which the soul recollected the eternal

¹ *Rhetoric*, 1404a. See the translation of this passage by C. S. Baldwin in his *Ancient Rhetoric and Poetic*, p. 23. Professor Baldwin denies that Aristotle had a "philosophic contempt" for delivery.

² *Rhetoric*, 1355 and 1356.

Ideas which it had known in a preëxistent state. Dialectic became a means of positive instruction, as well as of refutation. As Plato grew old and became more dogmatic in exposition, he found the dialectical form somewhat inconvenient, but he did not develop a new form for didactic procedure. The teachings implanted by dialectic represented reasoned and tested conclusions, carrying with them the certainty of philosophical knowledge, as opposed to the superficial opinions which constituted the material of rhetoric, and which persuaded without giving any real instruction. In Plato's later life, mathematical reasoning came to represent the type of demonstrated knowledge, but at the time of the attacks upon the sophists and rhetoricians, certainty and exactitude were to be found through the dialectical process.

Aristotle had even more clearly in mind the antithesis between opinion or common sense, and scientific knowledge or real instruction. He had, however, no sympathy with the Platonic doctrine of Ideas, and was free from any sense of a mystical significance for dialectic. Observing the didactic elements of the Platonic dialectic, he perfected the syllogism as the instrument of scientific knowledge and teaching. In the two books of the *Analytica Priora* he developed the functions and varieties of the syllogism and suggested that it could be applied both to scientific demonstration and to the process of argumentation in the realm of opinion. There is, however, such a difference of matter and purpose in scientific and nonscientific discussion that the use of the syllogism in the one and in the other is to be governed by a distinct body of theory. The *Analytica Posteriora* develops the use of the syllogism for demonstrative reasoning, and the *Topica*, together with the *Sophistici Elenchi*, for dialectic. The material for the *Topica* and the *Sophistici Elenchi*—which is really the last book of the *Topica*—is drawn from that type of argumentation pilloried by Plato in the *Euthydemus*, *Sophist*, and *Statesman*. Aristotle in his classification of fallacies cites the *Euthydemus* frequently. Plato drew a vivid picture of the fallacious disputers and excited the feelings of the reader against such arguments without really analyzing the fallacies. But Aristotle, in the *Sophistici Elenchi*, analyzed and classified fallacies with the purpose of enabling the reader to use them more skilfully. That type of disputation which Plato made a variety of false rhetoric, the very antithesis of true dialectic, is for Aristotle an integral part of dialectic. Thus it is

evident that Aristotle has allowed dialectic to descend into that realm of opinion inhabited by sophists and rhetoricians. Where Plato had been chiefly impressed by the contrast between rhetoric and dialectic, Aristotle noticed the similarities. The realm of opinion, which Plato had regarded as unworthy the attention of the philosopher, is thus accorded by Aristotle two distinct disciplines, dialectic and rhetoric. There are differences between the two, but the more fundamental contrast is between rhetoric and dialectic on the one hand, and scientific reasoning, on the other.¹

Scientific procedure, for Aristotle, starts with universal or necessary principles and proceeds to universal and necessary conclusions. Both dialectic and rhetoric, however, take as their premises current popular opinions, or perhaps the opinions of dissenters. Any probable or plausible assertion will serve. The fundamental principles of a science cannot be proved within the bounds of that science; they are therefore assumed. The only way of questioning them is in dialectical debate. A few fundamental principles, as axioms, are common to all or to several of the sciences; but by far the larger part of the principles employed are special to the sciences concerned. As against this, rhetoric and dialectic are not limited to the propositions of any particular field. They may regard the ultimate assumptions of any science as mere probabilities and discuss them as such. In dialectic, the number of special propositions, corresponding to scientific laws peculiar to one field, is small. On the other hand, the number of general propositions, called topics (corresponding to the comparatively few axioms of science), is large. In science, again, we do not have matter to be settled by debate, but rather by impartial investigation. Dialectic and rhetoric can argue as easily upon one side of the question as another. They may employ any material conceded by an opponent. They may be indifferent to the truth of a conclusion if the form and method have been accurately followed.

From all this it is evident that as contrasted with scientific knowledge, dialectic and rhetoric are much alike. There are certain differences, however, which Aristotle regarded as sufficiently fundamental to justify their treatment as separate disciplines. The most obvious difference, and one which accounts for several others, is that

¹For the relations of science, dialectic, and rhetoric, see Cope's *Introduction to Aristotle's Rhetoric*, p. 67; Poste's introduction to his translation of Aristotle's *Analytica Posteriora*: Appendix D in his translation of the *Sophistici Elenchi*; and Grote's *Aristotle*.

dialectic is an argument conducted by two speakers with a small audience of interested listeners who will see that the argument is fairly conducted. Such a method of argument is best fitted for speculative questions, although it can be applied to anything. It will be concerned with logical processes and not with the feelings of an audience. It is aimed not so much at persuading the opponent as at defeating him by involving him in contradictions. The method of reasoning employed is the syllogistic or inductive, the only difference from genuinely scientific reasoning being that the materials are taken from the realm of the merely probable. Rhetoric, on the other hand, because of the fact that one speaker is continuously addressing a large audience of untrained hearers, cannot use the form of scientific reasoning. In place of the syllogism and induction it uses the enthymeme and example. Since the feelings of the hearers will probably be more influential than the logic of the speaker, rhetoric must include an account of the emotions and characters of men. While rhetoric is not necessary to the dialectician, the rhetorician will be better for a thorough knowledge of dialectic.

One additional contrast between rhetoric and dialectic is of significance. Theoretically, Aristotle regarded rhetoric and dialectic as applicable to the same range of subjects. Theoretically, anything could be discussed by either method. But practically, as we see when we compare the topics of the *Topics* and the *Rhetoric*,¹ rhetorical discussion is limited to human actions and characters. The subject-matter of rhetoric is for practical purposes limited to ethics and politics. There is a mention of the popular exposition of scientific subjects as one of the uses of rhetoric, but the system as Aristotle develops it, is much more limited than the system of dialectical argument.

Analytics (logic), dialectic, and rhetoric form the organon of thought and expression for the ancient world. Aristotle, as much indebted to the Platonic dialogues, perhaps, as to his own observations of Athenian life, observed scientific thought, systematized it, and gave us logic; observing the sport dear to all Athenians—argumentation by question and answer—and systematizing it, he gave us dialectic; observing and systematizing the art of persuading crowds,

¹For a comparison of the *Rhetoric* with the *Topics*, and with all the other works of Aristotle with which it comes in contact, see C. A. Brandis, "Über Aristoteles' rhetorik und die griechischen ausleger derselben," in Schneidewin's *Philologus*, IV (1849), I.

he gave us rhetoric. Thus, although Aristotle agrees with Plato that the rhetorician should also be a dialectician, it is evident that the dictum has a very different meaning for the two writers.

Another suggestion in the *Phædrus* concerned order and arrangement. This suggestion is developed by Aristotle in the second half of the third book of the *Rhetoric*. He attacks as unnecessarily complex the numerous divisions of the contemporary rhetoricians, and treats arrangement under the heads of Proem, Narrative, Proofs, and Epilogue. As our purpose is to compare Aristotle with Plato, rather than to give an exposition of his *Rhetoric*, we need observe only that this Platonic suggestion is carried out by Aristotle, although he was probably much more indebted to other rhetoricians than to Plato for his discussion of arrangement.

The Platonic requirement that the nature of the soul must be shown, and arguments adapted to the different kinds of people addressed by the speaker, is the basis of the oft-repeated assertion that the *Rhetoric* is an expanded *Phædrus*. There are two reasons for this. In the first place, that part of the second book of the *Rhetoric* which treats of the emotions and characters of men is the part which has the greatest interest and significance for the modern reader.¹ Secondly, it is, perhaps, the most distinct addition Aristotle made to the work of his predecessors in the field. But even here, where Aristotle has apparently carried out the suggestions of his

¹Gomperz, in his *Greek Thinkers*, IV, 435, seems to feel that those sections of the *Rhetoric* which are genuinely a part of the subject are of relatively little significance for a philosopher, while the parts for which he professes admiration are really out of place in rhetoric. Referring to the treatment of the emotions and characters of men, he says: "It is surprising to find this subject, which seems to belong much more properly to psychology or descriptive ethics, imported into a work on rhetoric, and there treated with an exhaustiveness that goes far beyond the end in view. That which moved Aristotle to this procedure was probably, in the first place, the Platonic ideal of the art as set forth in the *Phædrus*; and secondly, the wish, cherished no less warmly by him than by his master, to separate the new exposition of rhetoric as widely as possible from the old empirical methods and routine wisdom. It so comes about that we have before us foundations of much greater strength and depth than is justified by the superstructure which rests upon them. We shall, perhaps, be not far wrong in conjecturing that Aristotle was glad of the opportunity to raise the tone of that initiation into rhetorical fencing tricks which practical considerations forced upon him. Another cause operating in the same direction may have been a recollection of the fact that at the beginning of the work he had been unwilling to allow emotional effects any place at all in oratory. Now that he felt constrained to descend from that ideal height, he preferred to do so in such a manner that the subject proscribed at first might appear in strictly scientific garb, not as merely auxiliary to rhetorical success."

master most brilliantly, it must be observed that his treatment is only a popular and inexact discussion of the external manifestations of character and emotions, and not the sort of treatment he would have given the doctrine of the affections, had he developed it in his *De Anima*. It is also to be noted that while the classification of the emotions is as complete as the rhetorician would desire, Aristotle did not share Plato's notion that a true art of rhetoric would enable a speaker to adapt himself to each of the persons of an audience as the dialectician adjusts himself to one deuteragonist. He expressly disclaims such a belief.

The theory of rhetoric is concerned not with what seems probable to a given individual like Socrates or Hippias, but with what seems probable to men of a given type.¹

Nor does Aristotle suppose that even the best of rhetoricians will always succeed with his audience. The function of rhetoric is not simply to succeed in persuading, but rather to discover the means of coming as near such success as the circumstances of each particular case allow.²

Style and delivery, Plato stated, were necessary preliminaries to the art of rhetoric. An elevated style, however, was to be attained, not by technique, but by contemplation of lofty subjects. Aristotle seems to have shared his master's feeling that style and delivery should be subordinate matters, as spectacle was the least artistic element of the drama. His classifying mind, however, was much better able than Plato's to resist the tendency to place all subjects in a hierarchical order of moral dignity and to slight all the lower orders. He dismisses delivery briefly with the explanation that not enough is yet known about it to treat it scientifically; but he does regard both delivery and diction as means of persuasive discourse.

Plato's dislike for writing, which in our day would so limit the province of rhetoric, does not seem to have disturbed Aristotle. He wrote several times as much as Plato, and upon subjects which Plato would probably have regarded as unsuitable for literary presentation. It is only on the heights of learning that truth and beauty are always compatible, and for the most part Plato kept to the heights. Aristotle saw his own writing, not as moral truth to be graven on the soul of

¹ *Rhetoric*, 1356b.

² *Rhetoric*, 1355b.

a reader, but as an instrument by which his thought was systematized and preserved. Had he agreed with the Socrates of the *Phædrus*, he would not have devoted twelve chapters of the *Rhetoric* to style.

XIV

In comparing Aristotle with Plato, we have seen that the *Rhetoric* discusses most of the questions of rhetorical theory raised by Plato in the *Gorgias*; it agrees with the rhetoricians that rhetoric is an art, that the universality of its applications does not mean that it has no subject matter of its own, that the evils arising from rhetoric are no greater than the evils that arise from the abuse of all good things, that truth and righteousness are, on the whole, more prevalent because of a general knowledge of rhetoric, and that the persuasion of multitudes of relatively ignorant people, instead of being merely a vulgar task, fit only for demagogues, is a necessary part of education and government in a stable society.

A contrast of the *Rhetoric* with the *Phædrus* makes it evident that even here Aristotle is closer to the rhetoricians than to Plato. Rhetoric is an art of appearance; and this fact neither prevents it from being an art, nor from serving the ends of truth and righteousness. Rhetoric, instead of being a sham dialectic, is the *counterpart* of dialectic, a dialectic fundamentally different from the Platonic conception of it. The analysis of the emotions, which seems to follow Plato, is, after all, of a loose, inexact, and external character, as Aristotle thought was suitable for rhetoric. Aristotle agreed with Plato that the rhetorician should be virtuous and intelligent, that he should be a keen logician, that he should understand the ordering and arranging of material, and that he should know many things beyond the principles of rhetoric. They were also agreed that contemporary rhetoricians fell far short of these ideals. But the fact that Aristotle and Plato agreed upon the deficiencies of Athenian rhetoricians seems to have blinded us to the equally significant fact that Aristotle's rhetorical theory bears more resemblance to that of Protagoras and Gorgias than to that of Plato.

XV

The significance of a study of rhetoric in Athens is not entirely historical. However indifferent we may be to Protagoras and

Gorgias, we live in a world of journalists, publicists, advertisers, politicians, diplomats, propagandists, reformers, educators, salesmen, preachers, lecturers, and popularizers. When in Platonic mood we condemn them all as sophists and rhetoricians. And the Platonic attitude is supported by the growth of specialization and "research." To large classes of specialists the rest of mankind is made up of ignorant laymen. These scholars and experts share Plato's contempt for the masses; they apparently are as blind as he to the limitations of the academic mind; they dwell so securely in the well-mapped areas of knowledge that they decline to venture into the uncharted realms of opinion and probability. The modern sophists may justly be reproached for their habit of offering mere opinion when knowledge is obtainable; but it may be questioned whether theirs is a greater error than the specialists' habit of mistaking knowledge for wisdom. In the problem of the relation of Plato to Protagoras, of philosopher to sophist and rhetorician, are involved the issues which we debate when we discuss the aims of a liberal education, the desirability of government by experts, the relation of a university to the state, the duty of a scholar in a democracy, the function of public opinion in a popular government, the difference between a conventional and a rational morality, to say nothing of more speculative questions.

We cannot agree with Bishop Welldon's statement that Aristotle's *Rhetoric* is "a solitary instance of a book which not only begins a science, but completes it," but we do not regard the *Rhetoric* as of merely historical interest. It is the one treatment of the subject which raises clearly the problem of the relation of rhetoric to psychology, ethics, politics, jurisprudence, and literary criticism. If we have made any progress in these subjects since Aristotle, in so far his *Rhetoric* may be inadequate for modern needs. But for a sense of proportion and a grasp of relations, we do well to acquaint ourselves with the survey of the subject made by the great classifier of knowledge.

A LATE MEDIEVAL TRACTATE ON PREACHING

HARRY CAPLAN

I

IN *The Decay of Modern Preaching*, Mahaffy bewails the lack of attention in courses of Homiletics to the rhetoric of theological learning. He declares that without it the learning is dead and, as it were, sealed in a tomb.¹ Pleading for the establishment of more chairs of Rhetoric in modern theological schools, he yet warns against naming them chairs in *Sacred Rhetoric*, since the appellation would rest on the false assumption that sacred rhetoric differs from any other rhetoric.² On the other hand Phillips Brooks, equally concerned for the good training of the preacher, with excellent use of the oratorical device of *prætermissio*, asserts: "Of oratory, and all the marvelous mysterious ways of those who teach it, I dare say nothing. I believe in the true elocution teacher, as I believe in the existence of Halley's comet, which comes into sight of this earth once in about seventy-six years."³ Involved, of course, in this difference of opinion is the ancient question of a definition of oratory and of rhetoric. Obvious in the statement of Brooks is a distrust not only for a type of instruction which, one now readily admits, was not always effective, but also for overembellishment of style, for display, and for inappropriate pulpit devices of delivery. Indeed, Brooks's *Lectures on Preaching* deal largely with the rhetoric of preaching, with invention and disposition and persuasion, and the preacher's personality. Patently, he was led into an erroneous divorcement of rhetoric from oratory, and into the false identification of oratory with delivery, or rather, with bad delivery.

The suspicion which Brooks avowed, as against the more discerning penetration of Mahaffy, was largely shared by preachers of the Middle Ages. To be sure, the pagan rhetoric of Cicero and Quintilian

¹ J. P. Mahaffy, New York, 1882, p. 73.

² *Ibid.*, p. 141.

³ *Lectures on Preaching*, New York, 1888, p. 178. For a similar position, cf. A. S. Hoyt, *The Work of Preaching*, New York, 1909, p. 43.

was well known, and used, by Cyprian, Augustine (who had taught it in the secular schools), Gregory, and many others. Yet Augustine finds it necessary to defend the use of rhetoric by a Christian teacher.¹ No doubt the frequent condemnation of eloquence by the medieval teachers, as by Brooks, arose from zeal to avoid ostentation and a style ill fitting the elevated tone of the preacher's calling. St. Thomas Aquinas says: "He who has to preach must make use of both eloquence and secular learning."² "The use of secular eloquence in Sacred Scripture is in one way commendable and in another reprehensible. It is the latter when one uses it for display or when one aims mainly at eloquence. He who strives mainly for eloquence does not intend that men should admire what he says, but rather tries to gain admiration for himself. Eloquence is commendable when the speaker has no desire to display himself, but wishes only to use it as a means of benefiting his hearers, and out of reverence for Holy Scripture." "It is laudable in preaching to make use of a harmonious and learned style, if it be not done from motives of display, but for the instruction of hearers and the persuasion of opponents." This is sound rhetoric. Gregory of Nazianzen's censure³ of preachers who used the eloquence of the theatre was a reproof of bad rhetoric. Of course the belief of medieval teachers that pagan books generally should be handled with care, against the contingency of exposure to impiety,⁴ did have an effect on the use of classical rhetorical works. But though secular learning was subordinated to sacred, it was by no means neglected.⁵

By the thirteenth century, the name Rhetoric had almost disappeared from teaching in the schools. The sermons, however, and the homiletical textbooks of the late medieval period show a highly developed rhetoric of invention, particularly in the application of the ancient rhetorical commonplaces, an organic system of disposition, and a shrewd attention to delivery. The uniqueness of the subject-matter of the sermon and the peculiar differentiation of the preacher's function should not misdirect us to the conclusion that there was an absence, in theory and practice, of the same broad rhetorical prin-

¹ *On Christian Doctrine*, IV, ch. I and II.

² For these quotations from St. Thomas, see J. Walsh, "St. Thomas on Preaching," *Dominicana*, V (1921), 6-14.

³ See P. A. Beecher, art. "Homiletics," *Cath. Encyc.*

⁴ See A. L. de la Marche, *La Chaire Française au Moyen Age*, Paris, 1886, p. 476.

⁵ See L. Bourgain, *La Chaire Française au XII^e Siècle*, Paris, 1879, p. 251.

ciples which operate equally in ancient or modern public speaking of any kind.

A late medieval treatise on preaching, representing a method of the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries, should give us insight into a very important period in the history of oratory, and particularly in the history of the oratory of the pulpit, since preaching had then, after a long development, risen almost to perfection. The rise of new orders, the spread of mysticism, the growth of scholasticism, and the high general culture of the time affected both the extent and method of preaching. I may not here attempt the hazardous task of reviewing the vast field of medieval preaching and preachers;¹ but suffice it to say that in the development of the sermon form, the time from the apostolic age to the twelfth century represents one period—that of the inorganic form. The sermon grew out of the custom of improvising a brief exposition of the Biblical passage for the day, following the order of the verses. It was an exegetical abstract, worked over, or it was a patristic homily. The homily was an informal discourse, a “conversation” (in Latin, *tractatus popularis*), a doctrinal interpretation of Scripture in a familiar way, without formal introduction or divisions. It might be treated sentence by sentence, or by concentrating the entire Gospel on one idea, or by selecting a virtue or vice from the Gospel to discuss, or by paraphrasing and applying the whole Gospel. Bede, Gregory, and Origen used homilies. Naturally the sermons of the period of conversion of the barbarians, those of Boniface and Cæsar of Arles, for example, attained to a high degree of energy and color. After the great missionary epoch, during the time when the clergy were recruited from the barbarians, there followed one of comparative decadence in preaching; then, with the age of Charlemagne, a gradual renascence. By the twelfth century in France, and the thirteenth in the rest of Europe, pulpit eloquence was at its height of excellence. One greatly regrets, for instance, that the harangues of Bernard, which aroused such multitudes to enthusiasm, are not extant.

As distinguished from the method of the homily, the preachers

¹ See E. C. Dargan, *A History of Preaching*, New York, 1905; R. Cruel, *Geschichte der deutschen Predigt im Mittelalter*, Detmold, 1879; A. Linsensmayer, *Geschichte der Predigt in Deutschland*, Munich, 1886; J. S. Maury, *Essai sur l'Eloquence de la Chaire*, Paris, 1877; A. L. de la Marche, *op. cit.*; L. Bourgain, *op. cit.*; J. M. Neale, *Mediæval Preachers and Mediæval Preaching*, London, 1856.

of this later phase—Albertus Magnus, Bonaventure, Thomas Aquinas—used sermons (*sermones*) in expounding the Gospel, following a systematic method. In the tractate to be presented, the strictly systematic scheme will be apparent.

The method of the thirteenth century, it will be seen, was to unfold the sermon from the internal essence of the truth with which it was concerned, by explaining the text and by deducing associated lines of thought, with strong dependence on what Bossuet later called, perhaps properly, the “banal” art of amplification.¹ But the analytical design of organization was at times so good, that it could easily sustain attention. The diversification of each member must not have presented difficulties to the attainment of clearness and orderly sequence. The scholastic influence appears in the resemblance which the sermons bear to philosophical discussions—in definitions, distinctions, dialectical inquiries, and argumentation. When allied to talent, the methodical spirit must have been highly efficacious, even though the sermons may in many cases have been too replete with divisions and trivial comparisons. Since the people had complete faith, it was instruction which they sought. Nor were the teachings always devoid of feeling. Sometimes majesty and great religious power were achieved. The principle of amplification it was probably necessary to use against the failure of inspiration. To be sure, they abused the habit of drawing too much out of one word. Eckhart gave a sermon devoted only to the word “and.”² Always the sermon rested on Scripture, whereof the preachers’ knowledge seemed intuitive, on the Fathers, and on the liturgical books, but often the severity was relieved by embellishment, and the discourse made lively by physical action. The mysticism in symbolical interpretation was profound and at times obscure. Moral points were not usually developed to their full extent, but merely proposed and applied by a figurative interpretation.

Response to preaching was on occasions exciting. Often the preachers were heckled.³ Often they were so popular that they left town secretly in the dead of night lest their departure be prevented by their devotees. Jacques de Vitry tells⁴ that Foulque de Neuilly

¹ St. Bonaventure, *De Arte Concionandi*, Part III, discusses the expansion of sermons.

² Linsenmayer, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

³ De la Marche, *op. cit.*, p. 216.

⁴ S. Baring-Gould, *Post-Medieval Preachers*, London, 1865, p. 11.

needed a new cassock each day, to replace that usually torn by the crowds, who came from distant countries to hear the holy man and share with him some of his sanctified possessions. In their efforts to amuse, some preachers were condemned for yielding to extravagance. Jacques de Vitry himself would suddenly lift his voice to shout: "That man sleeping there in the corner will never learn my secret."¹ An abbé, in the midst of his talk, awakened his sleeping flock by a swift change of subject: "There was once a king called Arthur." They started from their doze only to be chastised for lack of attention. Still one does not read of excesses in this period comparable to Oliver Maillard's reminders on the margin of a manuscript of a sermon of the year 1500: "Sit down—stand up—mop yourself—ahem! ahem!—now shriek like a devil."² Every method of preparation for delivery was employed. Some preachers, like Bede, spoke extempore, from prepared outline; some, like Anthony of Padua, read from notes. The author of the tractate before us has interesting observations on delivery.

The preachers studied their audiences. Gregory the Great devotes a whole chapter³ to the mere enumeration of the different types to be admonished by the preacher. The discourses of Jacques de Vitry cover one hundred and twenty categories of auditors. They preached to all and everywhere; men and women, rich and poor, day and night, in public places and streets and fields. Perhaps their greatest skill was shown in adjustment, in matter and diction, to illiterate audiences. Nothing was taken for granted; every thought was put in the most vivid and intelligible language, often with striking stories and homely proverbs. Were space allotted me, I should here clearly illustrate this by introducing an entire sermon. Thereby the characteristic unity of the medieval sermon might also be apparent. But something of the spirit of direct communicativeness with a simple audience may be caught from the following translation of an excerpt from a thirteenth century sermon. It is entitled "On the Angels,"⁴ and was delivered by the great Franciscan, Berthold von Regensburg, in the German vernacular of his day.⁵

¹ De la Marche, *op. cit.*, p. 214.

² Baring-Gould, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

³ *Pastoral Rule*, Part III, i.

⁴ In Pfeiffer and Strobl, *Berthold von Regensburg*, Vienna, 1880, pp. 174 ff.

⁵ It is safe to say that after the tenth century, Latin was not understood by the common people of Europe.

We celebrate to-day the feast of the Great Princes, the Holy Angels, who are to the whole world a great miracle, and in whom Almighty God has created many great miracles. And if a man did not wish for any other reason to go to Heaven, he might nevertheless easily go to Heaven for this reason: merely to see what wonders and wonders are there. And of the wonders there is no end, the wonders which God has brought to light in the Holy Angels. And they are the messengers of our Lord—for angel means, in Greek, a messenger. Our Lord had great joy, for He was without beginning, just as He is also without end. I speak of Divinity, of the Crown. Before He created anything such as we are, He had great delight within Himself and of Himself. Then He planned to create. He wished to create two creatures, two kinds of creatures, so that these might be sharers of His joy—but that He Himself because of them should have not less joy. And however much joy and delight He gave to them, on that account no less joy had He—just like the sunshine. However much of its light the sun gives us day by day, itself has no less light. So God made two creatures; they were man and angel. Then God made a thing. And it was the very best thing of all things that God had ever made. And He never made a thing so well among all the things which God made in order that man and angel should share in His joy; so good and so useful was it. And so God brought it about that men and angels should have therefrom more and more joy. And however useful was the thing, and however much honor and blessedness lie therein, still were there some angels in heaven who wished not to retain the thing. And they were shut out from the eternal joys, and thrown into eternal torture. And all the people who retained the thing, they remained with Almighty God in eternal joys, because they retained the thing which is so good, among all things the best [virtue]

And so we celebrate to-day the Feast of the Angels who remained with God, and did not fall. And so we celebrate to-day the Feast of St. Michael and the Holy Angels; and that we do not celebrate the Feast of the Holy Angels often in the year, therein our Lord did wisely and well. However easy it would be that we should celebrate their feast three times yearly, our Lord did well and wisely therein, and it is better that we do not celebrate their feast often. Why? See, for this reason. If we should celebrate their feast with singing and with reading, we should also have to preach about them, and if we had to preach often about the angels, perhaps a blasphemer would come along, and perhaps be so blasphemous, that he might preach of the heresy of the Holy Angels. For Our Lord has wrought so many wonders in the angels that we do not know them all for sure. He has done some miracles or wonders in the angels of which we do not know exactly, but only guess. And whoever guesses a thing, does not know it for sure. And so Our Lord has done many a thing in them that we well know. Whoever, therefore, might wish to preach the things which we guess, he might possibly preach heresy. And so no one should preach anything except that which we know for sure!

St. Thomas Aquinas' own preaching, and advice collected¹ from his writings, appear consistent with the doctrine of our treatise, the author of which claims adherence to the Thomistic school. Vaughan's biography discusses the Angelic Doctor's simple style, the strong intellectual element in his sermons, and his great powers of delivery. One of his sermons was greeted with such lamentation that he could not for a time continue. On another occasion he was applauded—an experience which Chrysostom of the fourth century often enjoyed, but which in the thirteenth was rare. His preserved² sermons are either bare sketches as reported by pupils and listeners, or perhaps the final recapitulations, such recapitulations as the author of our tractate refers to. Leo XIII thought so highly of Thomas' method as to commend it to all preachers.³

Some of his precepts relate to the subject-matter of sermons, the preacher's function, and his ethical qualities as preacher. "The matter of preaching is twofold; what is useful for the present life, as concerns God, or our neighbors, or ourselves; and what we hope to have in the next life." "All preaching should be directed to two purposes: demonstrating God's Greatness by preaching the faith; and showing forth His Goodness by elucidating the truth." "A preacher must have three qualities: stability, to ward him from error; clearness, to avoid obscurity in his teaching; utility, to seek God's Glory rather than his own." "A preacher must have three powers: that he be endowed with a fulness of knowledge of things sacred, to prove to others; that he be able to prove what he says; that he fitly put forth to his audience the things he conceives." "Two things are necessary for preachers, that they may lead to Christ. The first is an orderly discourse; the second is the virtue of good works."

Another injunction of Thomas warns against the telling of stories or fables.⁴ This advice, consistent with the omission from

¹See Fr. O'Daniel, "Thomas Aquinas as Preacher," *Ecclesiastical Review*, XLII (1910), 26-37; and especially J. Walsh, *op. cit.*

²*Divi Thomatis Aquinatis Doctoris Angelici Sermones et Opuscula Concionatoria*, ed. A. J. Raulx, Paris, 1881.

³See the Encyclical Letter on the Restoration of Christian Philosophy, prefixed to the Dominican Fathers' translation of the *Summa Theologica*.

⁴For these passages from St. Thomas, see J. Walsh, *op. cit.* With the last injunction, compare Dante's complaint of the use of fables in the preaching of his day, *Paradiso*, XXIX, 103-120. The medieval tractate of Humbert de Romans encourages the use of *exempla*: de la Marche, *op. cit.*, p. 277.

our treatise of any discussion of the *exemplum*, is an interesting divergence from a favorite practice of thirteenth century preachers, even among the Dominicans.¹ Some preachers, notably Jacques de Vitry² and Cæsar of Heisterbach, realizing that many listeners who were not moved by bare doctrine could be stirred by illustrative stories with pointed morals, used such *exempla* with great effectiveness. Some of these tales were of the Saints; many concerned the Devil. Almost all were full of superstition, but great numbers were characterized by genuine morality, shrewd knowledge of the world, and fancy and humor. Great collections³ of fables, bestiaries, and *exempla* were available for the preacher and were used throughout Europe.

As is to be expected, the theory of preaching, in point of time, succeeded the practice. In France, Guibert de Nogent's *Liber Quo Ordine Sermo Fieri Debet* appeared at the beginning, and Alain de Lille's *Summa De Arte Prædicatoria* at the end, of the twelfth century. The *De Instructione Religiosorum* of Humbert de Romans—who promises to teach a way of immediately producing a sermon for any set of men and for every diversity of circumstance⁴—belongs to the beginning of the thirteenth. Even before the twelfth century, the preacher could have recourse to collections of homilies (some as early as the eighth century), collections of text-materials for sermons, of sermons for each day, of commentaries, glosses, Biblical alphabeted vocabularies, and homiletical lexicons. Such preachers' anthologies, "The Garden of Delight," "The Flower of the Apostles," "The Book of Sparkling Points" were common in the European libraries. This apparatus, although it made for a general high level of preaching, must have smothered independent work in the less competent preachers.

The treatise which we are considering, and that attributed to Henry of Hesse, the *Tractatus De Arte Prædicandi*, were the first homiletical texts to appear in Germany.⁵

It would require special linguistic training in the vulgar tongues

¹ *E.g.*, the famous collection of Stephen of Bourbon.

² See T. F. Crane, *The Exempla of Jacques de Vitry*, London, 1890.

³ See T. F. Crane, *Mediæval Sermon Books and Stories*, Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society, XXI, 114 G, May, 1883; *Id.*, *Mediæval Sermon Books and Stories and their Study since 1883*, *ibid.*, LVI, No. 5, 1917.

⁴ Bk. II.

⁵ Cruel, *op. cit.*, p. 596.

of medieval Europe to make a substantial study of the influence of the sermon on the history of the period, or its influence particularly upon the development of the modern tongues. As the almost exclusive source of knowledge for the common people, the sermon was undoubtedly a great instrument of civilization. But a more practical and more promising inquiry for the student of rhetoric would be a comparison of the medieval sermon in content, form, methods, and function, with that of the Renaissance. The preaching of the Renaissance, in theory, marked a return to greater dependence on the Greek and Roman rhetoricians, and, in practice, specialized in long exordia and an interest in the civil law. Reuchlin's *Liber Congestorum De Arte Prædicandi* is largely a repetition of Cicero and Quintilian. In his *Ecclesiastes*, Erasmus glances back with ridicule at medieval preaching. Or an examination of the sermons of a John Donne of the seventeenth century would yield surprising discoveries of spiritual similarity with the sermons of the Middle Ages. Surely it was a far cry from the thirteenth-century sermons—tools in an instrumental art, serving the humble and illiterate—to those of the period of Louis XIV, when the eloquent divine preached in the drawing-rooms of fine ladies, and sceptics of the nobility were offered the entertainment of the latest fad in preachers. The eighteenth century had very little esteem for the thirteenth, condemning it for bad taste, dryness, a barbarous scholasticism, overcredulity, and complete lack of eloquence—this at a time when, in England, Doctors of Divinity were delivering before criminals awaiting execution sermons prepared for University audiences.¹ And perhaps most useful would be to contrast the medieval preacher with the Brookses and Beechers, or the present-day preacher, who sermonizes on social and political questions, uses longer texts, and opposes formalism. It is to be hoped that students of the history of rhetorical theory will be encouraged to make such necessary and illuminating studies.

II

The copy of the tractate used by the translator is found in the library of Cornell University, bound together with other, unrelated, ecclesiastical works, in a quarto volume of incunabula. The treatise covers nineteen pages. No date or place of publication is indicated.

¹ Neale, *op. cit.*, p. xv.

Most probably it was printed in the last decade of the fifteenth century.¹ The abundance of obscure contractions, suspensions, and special symbols make the reading difficult. Nor is the thought always clear. And the bad and anacoluthic Latin in some places makes translation even more difficult. In translating, I have attempted to give the reader some impression of the style of the original.

We do not know the Dominican author-compiler; neither do we know of any such tractate of Thomas² as that referred to by the compiler in the title.

The reader will observe that the author frequently quotes from memory. Steeped though he is in Scriptural lore, he is often guilty of false quotation. His fondness for the rhetorical principle of accumulation is evident. His use of the various senses of explication illustrates the influence of the Alexandrian philosophy on the thought of the Middle Ages.³ Almost every idea in this logical, detailed, precise exposition of the ancient method of invention is shrewdly developed by authoritative passages; the author practises the art of which he is expositor.

III

A Brief Religious Tract on the Art and True Method of Preaching, Compiled from Divers Writings of Holy Men of Learning, and chiefly from a certain short treatise of the Most Holy Doctor of the Christian Church, Thomas Aquinas, in which he proceeds in the manner and form of the material here presented.

AS I wish to communicate to my best beloved the following material on the method of popular preaching, after my many labors vouchsafed me by the All-Highest (who gives every good but never

¹ See L. Hain, *Reportorium Bibliographicum*, No. 1354; J. McGovern, "A Mediæval Manual for Preachers," *Ecclesiastical Review*, March, 1924, 70, 209 ff. The earliest copy known is a Nürnberg edition of 1477, according to Linselmayer, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

² No reference is found either in P. Mandonnet, *Des Ecrits Authentiques de St. Thomas d'Aquin*, Fribourg, 1910, or in M. Grabmann, *Die Echten Schriften des Heiligen Thomas von Aquin*, Münster in Westphalia, 1920.

³ We are helped to understand why in the *Convivio*, tract. II. i, Dante makes so much of this method in his own creative activity.

the ox¹ by the horns), I am therefore submitting to them an abridged tractate on this art, laboriously compiled from sundry books of holy men of learning.

It does not suffice to possess learning or command of the materials of preaching in order to preach correctly and vitally, but art and method also are required. So Gregory in the introduction of his *Pastoral Rule*² tells us that art has its place in the Word of God. The appropriate method of preaching may be a gift of God, who gives to preachers of the Gospel the Word, with abundant virtue, art, and therefore learning. As St. Augustine says, this gift is to be assisted in many ways, for nothing is more presumptuous than to teach before having learned the method of teaching.³ According to Tully, in the second book of his *Rhetoric*,⁴ it is not enough to have something to say, but there is required the very business of speaking as the quality of the hearer demands and exacts. For how can anyone speak, if he know not the means of knowing how he should speak? Likewise St. Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, emphasizes not only what is said, but the way in which it is said. Primarily he, who penetrates the hearts of his audience present, kindles and inflames his hearers, for as Gregory says, the way of the Lord is directed toward the heart when the doctrine of Truth is heard. The hearing of God's Word is the way of conversion from sin. A sermon of the Lord is the food of the mind. For of such great virtue is preaching that it recalls men from error to truth, from vices to virtues, it changes depravity to rectitude and turns rough to smooth, it provides faith, raises hope, enkindles charity, it dislodges the injurious, implants the useful, and fosters the honorable. For it is the way of life, the ladder of the virtues, and the door of Paradise. It is therefore not only art, but the art of arts,⁵ and the science of the sciences. William of Paris in approving and recommending the art of preaching says: "Since so many volumes of *Rhetoric* have been written by the band of rhetoricians, is it not much more just and worthy that their own art and doctrine should enjoy treatment by

¹ Can this be a pun on the nickname St. Thomas bore among his fellow students—the Dumb Ox? See R. B. Vaughan, *Life and Labours of St. Thomas of Aquin*, London, 1871-72, I, 316.

² The compiler is in the habit of quoting generally rather than literally or accurately. In this and some of the subsequent quotations it has not been possible to discover the exact references.

³ Possibly a general reference to *On Christian Doctrine*, IV, ch. I and II.

⁴ The reference may apply to the general implications of *De Oratore*, II.

⁵ Cf. Gregory, *Pastoral Rule*, ch. I.

the band of preachers, so that they will be divine rhetoricians?" Especially so, since, in its profit and utility, the rhetoric of oratory cannot compare with this Crown of Preaching.

Preaching, then, is the fitting and suitable dispensation of the Word of God.

Now, three kinds of preaching seem to have been used together. One is by the oral discussion of the Word of God—"Preach the Gospel to every creature."¹ Another kind is by writing. Hence the Apostle is said to have preached to the Corinthians when he wrote them the Epistles containing God's Word. The third kind is by deeds. So Gregory says every act of Christ is instruction for us. For He, the Supreme Master, our Lord Jesus, in order that nothing should be wanting in His teaching, took most diligent care to instruct in each kind, by works and by sermon, as it is written of Him in the first chapter of the Acts. Jesus undertook to do and to teach, or rather, first to do and then to teach. To denote this, each faithful preacher today is held to preaching first by deed and then by sermon. Would indeed that each preacher were to become such a diligent imitator of Christ Jesus, that he should preach not with the word alone but also with works! Whence Pope Leo:² "Teaching is more complete by deed than by voice, for the efficacious method of preaching is the agreement of life with doctrine." Gregory: "It follows that his preaching is condemned whose life is condemned." Aristotle, in the *Ethics*,³ says that they whose works are at variance with their speech will be despised. Bernard, in a sermon: "For the seed of God easily germinates when the preacher's piety strengthens these truths in the heart of the hearer." Unless I err in my judgment, the preacher must live justly and rightly. "Let him not render his words null by contradicting deeds," said Paul. "I hear them say nothing of those things which they do not perform through me,"⁴ said Christ, deeming it shameful to preach or teach what he neglected to do.

Thus preaching is verbal or vocal, as we have said. It is open and public instruction in faith and morals, devoted to the informing of men, and proceeding from the path of convictions and from the source of authorities. It will be open preaching, since, if it were

¹ Mark xvi, 15.

² Probably Leo I, the Great.

³ Possibly iv, 14, on boasters and humbugs, or x, 10, on sophists.

⁴ These two quotations are not Biblical.

secret, it would be subject to suspicion and would seem to let loose heretical dogmas. It will be public, because it is to be set before the many, not one individual. If it were set before the one, it would properly be not preaching, but doctrine. In this way preaching is instruction in faith and morals.

Two aspects of theology, whereof use is to be made in preaching, are involved: the rational, which pursues knowledge in things divine, and the moral, which offers information in morals. For preaching is instruction now in divine truth, now in conduct. This is imaged forth by the angels descending and ascending on the ladder which Jacob saw.¹ Mystically, the angels are those learned men who ascend when they preach heavenly things. They descend when they conform to things mortal.

In fact the efficient cause of a sermon is twofold: principal, and instrumental. The principal cause of every sermon is the Lord of Glory. That He may be moved by the preacher's tongue as agent, prayer is made to Him. Thus the preacher acts as an instrumental cause.

Also, the art of preaching is the science which teaches address on some subject. The subject of this art is the Word of God. The subject of the sermon, on the other hand, is the preacher's purpose, and so forth.

The preacher's principles of action can be used as follows. If the sermon delivered is from some authority of the Bible or the Saints, he must preach vigorously in order that his utterance may leave his mouth vigorously and abide in the listener's heart. Hence the preacher must sometimes try to speak with wonder, as at the passage: "I was not in safety, neither had I rest."² Sometimes he must speak with grief and lamentation, as at: "O my son, Absalom! my son, my son Absalom!"³ Often with horror and emotion, as at: "Except ye be converted."⁴ At times with irony and derision, as at: "Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God and die."⁵ Sometimes with gracious countenance and drawing together of the hands, as at: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."⁶ With a certain elation, as at: "From a

¹ Gen. xxviii, 12.

² Job iii, 26.

³ II Sam. xviii, 33.

⁴ Matt. xviii, 3.

⁵ Job ii, 9.

⁶ Matt. xi, 28.

far country have they come to me.”¹ At times with impatience and indignation, as at: “Let us make a captain.”² At other times with joy and elevation, and lifting up of the hands, as at: “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”³ Often with hate and turning away of the face, as at: “Depart from me, ye cursed.”⁴ Thus the preacher should conform to the gesture which he must believe Christ used when he said: “Destroy this temple,”⁵ by placing his hand above his heart and looking at the temple.

From these and following suggestions the preacher can easily collect and acquire gestures—the true art and method, which are, so to speak, the instruments guiding him in his activity. One is not hindered by learning to know many other gestures; and to know many other things—for example, that it is possible to be ignorant of method. Very few are the things we know in proportion to those we do not.

The theme is the beginning of the sermon. In regard to it there are many considerations: first, that it is taken from the Bible; that it has a clearly perceived meaning—not incongruous; that it is not too long nor too short; that it is expressed in terms well suited to preaching—in all its verbs, participles, and so forth.

Again, the theme is the prelocution, made for the proof of the terms of preaching present in the theme, through authoritative passages of the Bible and learned men, and by bringing in the authorities of philosophy through some simile, moral point, proverb, or natural truth.

Likewise what is said in the theme and its division is called the theme, since the division of the theme is the very theme itself. For from the theme the divisions proceed as from a root (as is clear in our tree below). That is why the division is called the theme.

Note that there are four parts of a sermon: the theme, the protheme or prelocution, the division or distinction, the subdivision or subdistinction. To them two principles apply: the deduction of those parts preached—through proofs and exhortations on the virtues—and the avoidance of faults.

¹ Joshua, ix, 6 and 9.

² Num. xiv, 4.

³ Matt. xxv, 34.

⁴ Matt. xxv, 41.

⁵ John ii, 19.

FAULTS IN SERMONS

Ignorance of the preacher
 Lack of fluency
 Excessive noisiness
 Sleepy delivery
 Finger pointings
 Frequent motion of the head
 Remote digression

The prelocation, too, can be formed by adducing authorities with reference to the theme. For illustration, let this theme be assumed: "O death, how bitter is the remembrance of thee."¹ Now the prelocation of this theme can be taken from definite authorities: the Psalmist, "Death is the worst of the sins";² Kings, "Surely the bitterness of death is past";³ Ecclesiasticus, "Remember thy last end and thou shalt never do amiss";⁴ Solomon, "Nothing is surer than death, nothing less sure than the hour of death";⁵ Augustine, "Of all terrible things death is most terrible";⁶ and also the authority of a philosopher. So the wise man says, "O death, how bitter is the remembrance of thee." These were the words of the theme taken up in the first place.

Next let the theme be posited with its divisions and subdivisions. After that comes the invocation of the Holy Spirit through angelic prayer—*Ave Maria* and so forth.

Then it is developed by arranging the parts after one another, by dividing and subdividing.

FIRST DIVISION

Death is twofold, spiritual and corporeal. Of things spiritual some are virtuous, some vicious. This is the subdivision of the first member. On the first is said: "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."⁷ On the second, the verse of the Apostle: "Blessed is he who hath been freed from a second death."⁸

¹ Ecclus. xli, 1.

² Vulg. Ps. xxxiv, 21.

³ Auth. Vers. I Sam. xv, 32.

⁴ vii, 36.

⁵ This quotation is not Biblical.

⁶ Cf. Aristotle, *Ethics* iii, 9.

⁷ Col. iii, 3.

⁸ Rev. xx, 6.

SUBDIVISION OF THE SECOND MEMBER

Of deaths corporeal, some are natural, some violent. On the former the passage from Kings is quoted: "We must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground."¹ On the latter, the verse from Jeremiah: "Let us condemn him to a shameful death."²

This theme fits our purpose because the prelocution is formed by distributing Gospel passages therein.

After the prelocution comes the division of the theme, then the subdivision of the principal parts of the theme, as is clear from examples.

As the theme, prelocution, division, and subdivision of the theme now stand, the sermon is not yet complete unless some principal part is amplified through other materials, to wit, through adduced authorities. Otherwise the sermon becomes too short and simple. Therefore certain methods should be used through which the whole sermon is to be expanded as conveniently as possible.

Likewise observe how the main material of all sermons, yes, rather of all of Sacred Scripture is comprised of these ten topics: God, the Devil, the Heavenly City, Inferno, the world, the soul, the body, sin, penitence, virtue. Very few indeed are these in proportion to the multitude of sermons. But even they, expanded according to the need of the hearers, grow as if into infinity.

The amplification of sermons is to be accomplished in nine ways: first, through agreements of authorities; second, through discussion of words; third, through the properties of things; fourth, through a manifold exposition or a variety of senses; fifth, through similes and natural truths; sixth, through marking of the opposite, to wit, correction; seventh, through comparisons; eighth, through interpretation of a name; ninth, through multiplication of synonyms. These means have been clarified in their order on the tree sketched at the end of the present treatise. After I successively expound each single method, together with its materials and examples, there will be an end to the present task.

First, accordingly, the sermon is expanded through agreements of authorities. Such agreements are threefold: of the Bible, of

¹ Auth. Vers. II Sam. xiv, 14.

² Wisd. of Sol. ii, 20. Erroneously ascribed to Jer.

sacred authorities, and of the moral philosophers. So also they are taken up in three ways: from a same, from a like, and from a contrary. Take the passage: "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree."¹ From a same: "The righteous shall flourish like the lily." From a like: "The righteous has these blessings: he is brave and prudent. And since he performs good works, he shall be rewarded." From a contrary: "The unrighteous, however, doth evil and so shall be punished."

Secondly, a sermon is expanded through discussion of words, and the like. There should be a discussion of the words both in the theme and in the authorities adduced. When the preacher wishes to discuss the words of Christ from some authority, he should first consider how many *clausulæ* the authority has, and the order of the clauses or of the words. For when the authority has several *clausulæ*, the preacher should consider whether he can adapt some one of them to the number of virtues and vices, or to the parts of penitence. This discussion of words can also be performed through definitions or descriptions of the term taken up in the theme. Take for illustration the Psalmist's, "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree in the home of the Lord." In discussing, I can inquire, who is the righteous? and can answer, he who returns to each what is his—to God, to prelates, to masters, and to men. To God, acts of Grace; to masters, due reverence; and to men, obedience.

Again I can discuss the words alternately, and ask, why the home? why the palm? why the Lord? why the home of the Lord? In the same way, what is good? what is honorable? and so with other words. These apply in the discussion of all themes or of other authoritative passages adduced in a sermon.

So let this theme (Luke xxi, 19) be used: "In your patience ye possess your souls." Now in discussing, I can ask, who is patient? and, what is patience? I can answer, patience is the disregarding of hostility; and the disregarding is forbearance of the mouth from murmurings and dark speech, and is the peace of the heart from hate and rancor. Likewise take the passage: "All men are liars,"² and: "Every one of them is gone back."³ In dis-

¹ Ps. xcii, 12.

² Ps. cvi, 11.

³ See Ps. xiii, 3, and liii, 3.

cussing, I can ask, who are they? I can answer: lay monks, prelates, subordinates, cloistered monks, the secular, and so forth. The discussion can be made entirely quantitative, that is, by enumeration of the whole authority into parts, as above: laics, prelates, subordinates, cloistered monks, and so on.

Words can also be discussed through argumentation—for example, through reasoning from a major or minor analogy; from opposites, as contrast, affirmation, or denial; or from relation, as privation or possession. Similarly, from praise or blame, and from all the dialectical and rhetorical commonplaces which obtain in undertaking a sermon. For an example of reasoning from a major analogy, take the passage: "God spared not the angels that sinned."¹ Therefore He does not spare sinful men, the greater ingrates. Again, He did not spare Adam and Eve, whom He made with His own hand, nor Judas, His apostle and disciple. Therefore neither will He spare others who sin in their own way. For if that which *seems* greater is not really greater, neither will that which *seems* less be less.

In the same way from a discussion of words he can bring out for himself the *effects* of the terms taken up in the theme. Take this theme (Luke xviii, 14): "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted." In discussing the effects of the terms of this authority, I can say: The causes of humility are many. "Man that is born of woman"—thus, with guilt—"is of few days"—thus, in motion—"and full of trouble"²—thus, of weeping.

Likewise through the effects of vices and virtues can sermons be developed and expanded. For example, man is exalted through humility. So we should humble ourselves. Conversely, the opposite applies. So we should beware of exalting ourselves.

The words of some authority can also be discussed through the fourfold combination of copulative and disjunctive parts in the theme—from the part of subject and predicate. For example, take this passage: "The voice of rejoicing and salvation in the tabernacles of the righteous,"³ and so forth. I can discuss it as follows. Voice is manifold in the hearts and consciences of different people. There is the voice of rejoicing, and not of salvation but of damnation,

¹ II Pet. ii, 4.

² Job xiii, 1 (Vulg. xiv, 1).

³ Ps. cviii, 15.

in the tabernacles of the sinners, who here have your consolation. And there is the voice of salvation, not of rejoicing, in the tabernacles of the penitent. And there is a third voice, neither of rejoicing nor of salvation, in the tabernacles of the damned. And there is a fourth voice of both rejoicing *and* salvation in the tabernacles of the saved. In the same way discuss: "I have done judgment and justice."¹ Some do judgment and not justice; others, the opposite; some, both; others, neither. Or this: "I will sing of mercy and judgment: unto thee, O Lord, will I sing."² So discuss other themes, almost infinite in number.

The third kind of expansion can be made through the properties of things. A sermon can be prolonged and amplified through the properties of things with reference to the praises of the conduct of someone. For example, in the Psalms it is written: "God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."³ This may be discussed as follows. Grace is conveniently denoted by oil, for oil has a sanative virtue. Thus Grace cures the wounds of the soul by destroying sins. This method the Saviour used (Matt. xxii and Mark xii). In the parable of the husbandmen who slew the heir,⁴ this way was also used; and by the prophet Nathan,⁵ and in Romans xii. Let punishment be administered them whom the oil of Grace does not avail. Similarly, "As the lily among thorns,"⁶ for a lily is white and fragrant, whereas to man a thorn is such and such. Such exposition can be made on both good things and evil—for instance of evil things, hypocrites and man.

Fourthly, a sermon is expanded through a multiplication of explanations. If the passage has a number of meanings, the preacher should examine how through them the sermon can be expanded. It should be noted that these meanings are fourfold, and that the Old Testament constitutes a figurative outline of the New, because the New Testament is explained of itself.

(1) According to the historical or literal sense. Of it Jerome speaks. It is the simple explanation of the words, as when we explain a thing as it was seen or done. In the *Gesta Romanorum*

¹ Ps. cxix, 121.

² Ps. ci, 1.

³ Ps. xlv, 7.

⁴ Matt. xxi.

⁵ II Sam. xii.

⁶ Song of Sol. ii, 2.

it is said: "David ruled in Jerusalem." Following that sense, we explain according as the words sound.

(2) According to the tropological or moral sense. Of it Gregory speaks. We use this sense when we speak of a matter from the moral point of view, looking to instruction or correction of morals. We use it mystically or openly. Mystically, as: "Let thy garments be always white,"¹ that is, at all times let thy deeds be clean. Openly, as: "John, my little son, aspire to the name of son not only by word and tongue, but also by deed and truth." Or we explain tropologically when we convert what has been done into what should be done, as: "Just as David conquered Goliath, so ought humility to conquer pride." In another way this sense is the moral sense, because it regards the habits of men, to wit, virtues and vices. In the use of the tropological or moral sense, the ways of the world should be introduced, vices dissuaded against, and habits corrected, and the conclusion ought to be made with the authority from which the theme has derived. There are three parts of men: the spiritual, the noble, and the vulgar. Hence correction should be made one way in regard to the spiritual, and otherwise in regard to the noble.

(3) A sermon can be expanded according to the allegorical sense. About it Ambrose speaks. Exposition by the allegorical sense is exposition by a sense other than the literal one. David reigns in Jerusalem, means that Christ, who is signified through David, reigns in Jerusalem, that is, in the Church Militant. In the use of this sense, exemplification should always be made by a simile, as when there is introduced the life of Christ, the Blessed Virgin, or another Saint. Always their virtues are wanting in us. So we should attempt to act like to them. Since every act of Christ is our instruction, and since, likewise, whatever good the Saints have done and whatever ill have borne, have been entirely for our improvement and example, let us follow their footsteps.

(4) A sermon can be expanded according to the anagogical sense. It is the anagogical sense when we speak of Those on High, mystically or openly. Mystically, as: "Blessed are they that wash their gowns in the blood of the Lamb that they may have right to the tree of life."² That is, Blessed are they who purify their

¹ Eccles. ix, 8.

² Vulg. Rev. xxii, 14.

thoughts so that they may see Jesus Christ, who says: "I am the way, the truth, and the life."¹ Openly, as in saying: "Blessed are they of clean heart, since they see God." With this sense the minds of the hearers are to be stirred and exhorted to the contemplation of heavenly things. Make the conclusion with the authority from which the theme derived.

Fifthly, a sermon is expanded through analogies and natural truths. For illustration, posited that in the theme or in some other authority of the sermon the discussion is upon the love of God, why God is to be loved. Then the preacher can expand his sermon through some natural truth like the following. It is natural for every creature to love its parents. How much the more ought we to love God, from Whom it becomes natural for us to love our parents. Then *a fortiori*, we should love Him from Whom our parents and we come. Amplification of the sermon can be accomplished also through analogies. For example, posited that in some part of the sermon the discussion is upon the love of kin and the providing for them. Then I can make an analogy with irrational beings, let us say, sows. When one sow squeals, all rush together for mutual aid. If irrational animals act thus, then *a fortiori*, we rational beings ought to provide for and help our kin in the time of necessity. So in a like manner can a sermon be expanded by other analogies.

Sixthly, the sermon is expanded through marking of an opposite, to wit, correction.

Let the marking of an opposite be used when some people act in a way contrary to that in which a thing should rightly be done. The Lord God, on account of His Goodness, which He reveals to us in creation, revocation, and redemption, is to us like a good father to his sons, in that He provides for us in all necessary things, and recalls us to Himself through many and diverse happenings, so that we can approach to Him and possess eternal life. This He does not for His own sake, since He is sufficient unto Himself, but from pure goodness. For this reason deservedly should the acts of Grace be performed. Nothing displeases the Lord God more than ingratitude. Where there is ingratitude, Grace does not find access or footing, because ingratitude dissipates merit, destroys

¹ John xiv, 6.

rewards, dries the fount of Divine pity, and obstructs the days of Grace.

The opposite meaning is in the form of correction. It should be used in every sermon in order that evils committed may not be deemed other than evil, and not be defended as though they were lawful.

Two principles through which a sermon can be expanded apply in the marking of an opposite: confirmation and refutation.

In confirmation there should be mentioned the extrinsic utility which accrues to the possessor of a thing, or which can accrue if the thing is good in itself. If the thing is bad, the utility which accrues to its opposite should be mentioned, to wit, by setting forth various virtues and aptitudes for good works. But in the contrary method of refutation, there should be set forth the evil losses which follow or can follow the possessor of a thing, or follow the thing, if it is evil in itself. But if it is a good thing, what will follow its opposite should be declared; to wit, the various inclinations to evil and the different vices caused by evil in a man. Finally, conclude by explaining how good or how bad the things become and which of them are the things by which people may be rendered blamable or praiseworthy.

Seventhly, the sermon is expanded through comparisons.

Expansion of sermons by comparisons occurs when an adjective is used in some authority. Then it of itself can become a discourse through its positive, comparative, and superlative, and conversely, from its superlative to the other grades of comparison. For example, the Psalmist writes: "Thou art great and doest wondrous things."¹ It may be discussed as follows. Great has God appeared in the creation of things, greater in the re-creation of man, but greatest in the glorification of the Saints. In Matthew xix,² it is written: "He that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin." Continue as follows. Judas was guilty of a great sin, because from greed he coveted a great reward; of a greater sin, because he betrayed his Master; of the greatest sin, because he despaired of the mercy of God.

Note, too, an example from the superlative: Be ye imitators of God, because ye are dear on account of the image of creation,

¹ Ps. lxxxvi, 10.

² Wrong reference. John xix, 11.

dearer on account of the reward of redemption, dearest on account of the inheritance of Heavenly Bliss. So on Ephesians ii, 4: "But God, who is rich in mercy, with His great love for which He loved us," say: "The Charity of God was great for us in creation, greater in guidance, greatest in redemption. But it will be exceeding in glorification." Similarly, on the Psalmist's: "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most Mighty,"¹ the discourse may run like the following. They girt themselves, mighty in guarding their husbands, more mighty as continent widows, most mighty as continent virgins. Likewise, Wisdom xxxix:² "But mighty men shall be searched out mightily." Thus the mightier more mightily, the mightiest most mightily, and so on. Also Galatians vi, 10: "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men." So do good to subordinates, peers, and superiors. And many things of this kind.

In the same fashion the discourse can be developed with regard to different things. Take for example Romans xxiii:³ "These are the names of the heroes of David. Seated in the seat, the wisest captain among three," and so forth. Declare who the wise are—they who have experience; the wiser, they who have wisdom in things human; the wisest, they who have wisdom in things divine. So the discourse can be carried on through various kinds of reception, as with: "Then took he (Simon) him up in his arms."⁴ Discuss it thus. Simon received Him into his arms; Mary conceived Him in the womb; Martha received Him into her home; the Father received Him into Heaven. In the second book of Matthew⁵ it is written: "And show yourselves men in behalf of the law." Some strive in behalf of the understanding of God through contemplation, some through anxious care,⁶ some through emulation. Observe how much finer this method is in Latin than in the vulgar tongue.

The sermon can also be developed through various aspects. For instance in John viii, 26, it is written: "I have many things to say to and judge of you." Christ speaks *to* us as a judge, as an

¹ xlv, 3.

² Actually vi, 6.

³ Wrong reference. Vulg. II Reg. xxiii, 8.

⁴ Luke ii, 28.

⁵ Wrong reference. I Mac. ii, 68.

⁶ I have omitted a phrase here: *Quidam per simulationem contemnunt*. Its inclusion violates sense.

advocate. He speaks *in* us as an inspirer. He speaks *with* us as a learned man. And the like. In this method things which are "for an end" are often multiplied. For illustration, "for that end" which is remaining in sin, different people conduct themselves differently. Some propose to remove the sin. Some seem partly to confess their sins, and partly not. Some beware of committing sins but do no penance for sins committed. Some repent of having committed sins but do not beware of committing sin. Take up the authority of Romans vi, 1: "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" Then say: some remain in sin, and so forth.

Eighthly, the sermon is expanded through interpretation of a name. For example, when a name in some authority needs interpretation, this can be so accomplished that the material will be better understood and received. Just as God is explained as giving eternal life to His own, so Israel is interpreted as man seeing God, or as a prince or hero with God. Whoever wishes to expand a sermon through this means assumes the interpretation which he sees is useful for achieving his end. If in some authority this name, Israel, appears, and the preacher is preaching on bravery, let him supply a meaning to some Saint in accordance with this interpretation, especially if he uses definition or description. Take the passage: "Blessed are they that dwell in thy House, O Lord!"¹ The definition of blessedness is made the subject, as follows: "Blessedness is the state of all good congregations." Then show to whom in the House of Heaven blessedness is bestowed—to him in whose vision there is truth. Then, the state of blessedness is brought about through the fruition of supreme goodness. Finally, the desire for all wishing and yearning will be calmed. Thus the sermon is expanded through interpretation and definition.

Ninthly, the sermon is expanded through a multiplication of synonyms, particularly when the matter in hand is reproving, laudatory, or exhortative. The reproving, thus: "It is the word of blessed Job² that man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble." Amplify by synonyms. Man is filled with woes in that he is oppressed with cares, surrounded by worries, irritated by adversity, choked by perils, and the like.

¹ Ps. lxxxiv, 4.

² xiv, 1.

Also so expand in eulogy: "Truly was he a light to the erring, a torch to the unknowing, a lamp to the wandering." Or if in someone's praise we speak of virtue, we may say: "This virtue decorates the mind, adorns the soul, honors conversion, and magnifies Grace."

Likewise in exhorting to emulation, our ancestors are thus used for exemplification: "Let us imitate the good Saints, let us follow the righteous, let us consider the examples of our fathers." This use is clear in the passage of the Psalms: "O come, let us sing unto the Lord, let us make a joyful noise."¹ A similar expression of good will is: "We praise you and glorify you,"² and the like.

If you commit to memory, retain, and resort frequently to, the nine ways just treated, you will find no themes, or very few, in which two or three or more of the methods do not apply. You should select that method which is most convenient to time, place, and audience. "Let us think of these circumstances,"³ says the Apostle to Timothy. All divinely inspired Scripture is useful for teaching, arguing, educating, and arresting injustice, so that man is perfected by instruction in every good work of God.

Now finally we must see what precautions the foresighted preacher should maintain in the pulpit.

First precaution: No preacher should fear to show reverence of the Lord, Jesus Christ, and the Glorious Virgin Mary, His Mother. Thus, for example, do the ambassadors and the household of princes make salutation by saying: "Our Master and Glorious Prince," and bowing. Also thus do the people of the court. And when the canons of churches and cathedrals receive papal bulls, they lay down their birettas and reverently kiss the feet of the Most Holy. For much greater reason, and *a fortiori*, should we show reverence to our Lord, Jesus Christ, our Creator and Redeemer, and the Glorious Virgin, His Mother.

Second precaution: A preacher should never utter hastily the name of God, the Blessed Virgin, or another Saint, without using an adjective. Thus, say: "Our Lord, Jesus Christ, His Glorious Mother, the Virgin Mary," and so forth.

¹ xcv, 1.

² Cf. Luke ii, 20.

³ This does not appear in the Vulgate.

Third precaution: The preacher should never conduct himself frivolously or presumptuously in the pulpit, as, for example, with reference to the Conception of the Blessed Virgin, and the like. Some people say she was conceived in original sin, some the contrary. On this subject it must be said that it better befits the honor and praise of the Glorious Virgin piously to believe she was not conceived in such sin, than to defend her frivolously. Since everything is possible with God, it was possible for Him to choose the Holy and Immaculate Womb in which He wished to be incarnated. Scholars may often disagree on questions which relate to man, in which case it is not contrary to faith. But where it is a matter of faith, no one disagrees with another.

Fourth precaution: When the preacher gives occasion for doubts and questionings in the pulpit, he should not retire without solving the point. For the people, being simple, and ignorant how to distinguish ordinary writings from Sacred Scripture, may doubt, and even commit offense. So they should by no means be left unsatisfied. Therefore let the preacher solve the point, or rather not propose it.

Fifth precaution: He should take extreme care to express the last syllable of each utterance as clearly and completely and fitly as the first, that is, he should end a phrase as vigorously as he begins it. In this way the matter becomes more understandable. You will perceive this more clearly in the ensuing precaution.

Sixth precaution: The preacher should speak complete words, intelligibly, and slowly. And especially he should not repeat one thing two or three times, or change the words. Multiplying words thus does not sound well; rather it often creates tedium and laughter in the hearers, unless for the sake of better impressing difficult or unusual material, it is at times necessary to reiterate or repeat.

Seventh precaution: The preacher should conduct himself and speak with as great gravity as he should have in speaking of Christ in His presence, and in that of other princes and kings. So the preacher should show love, for in it do the guidance and care of souls through preaching consist. He should show love in the presence of the simple as in the presence of princes. Indeed with the sheep intrusted to him, the care of souls is equal, since a prince's soul is no better than a pauper's. Hence the preacher should show himself quite solicitous and diligent in caring for God's souls. From concern of this sort great merit accrues to him.

Eighth precaution: Above all, the preacher should beware of passing on too hastily to things beyond—as is the spirit compelling men to haste. It impedes the speaker and confounds the gravity and meaning of the discourse.

The ninth precaution is restraint in looking about. This is very important in preaching, because objects disturb the senses, and through an object the natural memory is scattered and thus the order of memory confused.

Tenth precaution: That in grave matters of correction, the preacher should not resort to specific allusion. As a wounded horse does not willingly permit touching his wound, so, by nature, sinners dread being corrected, since every virtue is natural and every vice is against nature, according to the Blessed Bernard. Everyone shrinks from a fault committed, because nature, from which it is at variance, by ordination of God attests what evil should not be done. So, conversely, no one shrinks from virtue. Therefore every virtue is natural and every vice unnatural. In this connection the preacher should also note that correction has a threefold state. The correction of the spiritual is one thing, that of the noble another, that of the common still another.

Eleventh precaution: The preacher should carefully avoid prolixity in a sermon, lest the people weary and henceforth shun other sermons. Wherefore the preacher should zealously collect more useful and fruitful material, and reduce it to a brief and compendious summary, in order that the people may be better able to remember it when he ends. If the preacher leaves them, so to speak, unsated, quite willingly will they hear more of the same substance. If any of his material remains unsaid, let it be for the next ensuing Holy Day. So let the preacher watch his hour, and when it is over, cease his sermon.

Twelfth precaution: In the method of using the vulgar tongue, the preacher should not shackle himself to its difficulties, as for example, that of translating the words in the same order and separately, as they stand in the Latin. Let him translate in a better and clearer way. He must at times help his material, that is, express it otherwise than through the exact order of the words. Often he must use circumlocution. Take the passage which defines male as that "that openeth the matrix."¹ It is not fitting thus

¹ Exod. xiii, 15.

grossly to express the female organ or gate of birth. And so with other matters concerning women.

In bringing to an end the materials prescribed, dear brethren, to earn eternal life the Word of God is not enough, unless each studies to fill his mind therewith, in order to be able to escape the horrible peril of the unprofitable servant.¹ Our Saviour orders him to be cast into the outer darkness with hands and feet bound. For a servant who knows the will of his Master and does not fulfil it, will be flogged with many blows. Through the holy apostles and other learned men the Lord God gave us the Sacred Scriptures, in which He teaches us His Will and the True Way by which we can come into the Kingdom of Heaven. Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Gospels instructs us like a schoolmaster how to arrive at eternal life. Therefore let us in deed fulfil what we are shown we must do and emulate.

This is the end of the Art and True Method of Preaching, composed by St. Thomas Aquinas, and illustrated by the works of other Holy Doctors. If one diligently studies it, surely he will be great in the art.

It remains only to form a tree, together with a declaration of its meaning. Preaching is like a real tree. As a real tree develops from root to trunk, and the trunk grows into main branches, and the main branches multiply into other branches, so in preaching the theme develops into the protheme or prelocution as root into trunk. Then the prelocution or protheme grows into the principal divisions of the theme as the trunk into the main branches. And the principal branches should, beyond, multiply into secondary divisions, that is, subdivisions and subdistinctions, and finally expand as the example in the tree below shows. Its theme is divided into three parts; each part is divided into three members; each member can be amplified by several of the nine methods above described, as will stand out more clearly on the tree below.

Now note that the method of preaching is threefold.

In the first kind, the preacher takes up his theme, says the prayer, and proceeds to the consummation of his sermon. The first

¹ Matt. xxv, 30.

method then is by explaining the Gospel. It is the ancient method, well exemplified by the homilies of Gregory and other holy doctors. After the exposition of the Gospel, the preacher should advance to the division and subdivision of his theme and the main substance of his sermon. Such, in effect, is the whole sermon. Then he should make invocation of the Holy Spirit, since without divine help he could not express such lofty thoughts. And he implores the Virgin Mary by the *Salutantes* together with the *Ave Maria*, or through some other invocation. This method is the lay, popular, or beautiful method. The decrees prescribe the elucidation of the Gospel to the humble on Sundays.

In the second method, the preacher pronounces the theme, says the prayer, and proceeds to the development of his sermon—to the division, or to the distinction, when there is no division of the theme. For example, take this theme on the dead, "O death, how bitter is the remembrance of thee." The preacher would subjoin: "We should know the remembrance of death is bitter to lovers of the world for three reasons: first, on account of the world which they leave; secondly, on account of the future punishment they receive; thirdly, on account of the delights of the flesh which they lose." See how it advances to distinction when no division develops from the theme. This method is the light and simple method. No prelocution is made from the theme; the exposition of the Gospel is not introduced; nor is there a division of the words of the theme.

The third method is our plan. First the preacher should pronounce his theme in Latin in a low voice, then introduce one prayer in the vulgar tongue, to wit: "May Our Lord, Jesus Christ, give to men and living things Grace and mercy, to His church peace, and to us sinners after this life eternal life." Now he should resume his theme, using the vulgar tongue for expression. And after this he can draw or elicit one prelocution through similes, moralizations, proverbs, or natural truths, or sometimes even by adducing definite authorities. Another name for the prelocution is the *protheme*, because it is expressed before the division of the theme and the main substance of the sermon. Mark that in the prelocution or *protheme* there should be no prolixity, so that the theme with its chief material of the sermon can have place for expression. When the prelocution has been premised, resume the theme and its division. After this comes the invocation of the Holy Spirit, just as above. Next comes

the treatment of the members in order: first, the first main part of the theme with its divisions; next, the second main part of the theme with its divisions; and so with the third. And when all the members, main and subordinate, have been discussed, the preacher can make a practical recapitulation of his sermon, so that if they have neglected the beginning, the people may know on what the sermon and its conclusions are based. Thus, with other considerations, the material of the sermon can be better grasped.

This method is the more common one among modern preachers and is as useful to intelligent preachers as to hearers. As was above mentioned, an example of it appears in the tree below.

Unfortunately, the tree, or diagrammatic chart of contents, with which the Tractate ends, is missing from the Cornell University copy of the text.

FRANCIS BACON, THE POLITICAL ORATOR

ROBERT HANNAH

I

FRANCIS BACON'S is a name familiar to students of history, law, philosophy, literature, science, and politics. It is no exaggeration to state that few men ever lived possessed of such various titles to the respect and admiration of posterity. For Bacon was a distinguished lawyer, philosopher, scientist, statesman, and man of letters.

The essayist who ventures to write of Lord Bacon must ever remember that he is only a borrower. His work can be to a very small extent the product of original research. James Spedding finally established the text of Bacon's works, and gave us a monumental biography;¹ his successors must be content for the most part to act as commentators on the results of his labors. But it is a wide field that the office of commentator opens to the Baconian student and investigator. There are many labyrinths in Spedding's vast storehouse which warrant and entice further investigation.

Before Spedding published his biography of Francis Bacon, and in the years which have intervened since, the man and his works have received the attention of critics and scholars the world over. Certain phases of his life have been made the subject of special studies; and the *Essays*, the *Advancement of Learning*, and many others of his separate works have been edited and reëdited with varying degrees of thoroughness. Much that is informing has been recorded on Bacon as a philosopher, a statesman, a scientist, a lawyer, an essayist.

In the whole body of judgments passed upon the life and achievements of a distinguished man, it frequently happens that some quality

¹ *The Works of Francis Bacon*, collected and edited by James Spedding, R. L. Ellis, and D. D. Heath, Boston, 1860-64. For Spedding's *The Life and the Letters*, I have used the London edition (included in *The Works*) assigned to the same editors, 1862-74.

in his work and character is consistently but unduly emphasized, while other equally interesting attributes are ignored almost completely. Francis Bacon is among the geniuses who have suffered this fate. Bacon's moral character is not one of the neglected aspects of the man. His morals have been written about, again and again. His weaknesses of character stirred the periodical writers of the nineteenth century, who magnified out of all proportion the moral side of Bacon's life and activities. In the hands of Macaulay¹ and other essayists the controversy was carried on; Bacon became either a saint or a sinner, for these critics seemed to find no happy medium. As a consequence, many of Bacon's acts have been criticized on a moral rather than a political basis. It is true that morals and politics cannot be entirely separated in considering a figure like Francis Bacon, but the biographers and critics have rather tended to argue the moral issues involved in terms of the ethics of their own times, than to comprehend Bacon's public life in relation to the standards and customs of his day. The reason is suggested in an essay of M. André Chevrillon's² on Shakespeare: Of Shakespeare we know hardly anything, for his person has disappeared in his work; this almost complete eclipse of the individual counts for a good deal in the national worship of the poet. A hero is more easily defined when nothing remains of his human personality, and his life work also becomes more unaccountable. If this be true of Shakespeare, certainly the reverse is found in Lord Bacon's case. It would seem that too much has been passed on to us about Bacon: too many fables about his character; too much that has been colored by prejudice, or by a failure to understand the facts. In Bacon's case the man has not been lost in the works; the works have tended to be lost in the man.

Because Bacon's moral character has received undue consideration from his biographers and critics, other aspects of his career have not been tendered the particular care which they deserve. What, for example, is known about Bacon the political orator? This question has been neglected by many commentators, and those who have touched upon it at all have dismissed the problem in a word or two. Francis Bacon took an active part in the political life of the con-

¹ *Critical and Historical Essays*, ed. Montague, London, 1903, II, 177-235.

² "Shakespeare and the English Soul," an essay, reprinted in *Three Studies in English Literature*, New York, 1923.

cluding years of Elizabeth's reign, and became one of the most prominent members of Parliament during the first quarter of the seventeenth century. Historians who have written of this period testify to Bacon's ability as a political speaker. Naturally, these writers¹ are concerned primarily with the historical significance of the orations, which are used as illustrative data in the story of the struggle for parliamentary reform, and of other vital movements of that time. But though the historian recognizes that Bacon's speeches were notable factors in molding the political events of his day, he is interested only in their causes and effects; he says little of their rhetorical qualities; he barely mentions their author as orator and debater *per se*.

Those of his own works in science and philosophy for which Bacon had the highest regard he either wrote in Latin, or had translated into "the universal language." For his compositions in his native tongue he expressed little less than contempt.² All that Bacon thought best in his scientific researches is now almost unanimously rejected as worthless for our present-day uses. It is not too bold to say that the Latin works upon which he rested his fame with future ages, will very shortly be little more than waste paper. One voices the opinion of even the most sympathetic of Bacon's critics and biographers when he asserts that it will be the *Advancement of Learning*, the *English Essays*, and the professional writings, legal and political, that will sustain his reputation as a master of wisdom and of style as long as the English language shall last.

Whatever Bacon may have thought of the literary or rhetorical value of his own speeches, we know that he took care to preserve them for the reading public. Copies of the speeches, written and corrected in Bacon's own hand, have come down to us. Most of the speeches accredited to him are pronounced genuine by Spedding.³ It is an interesting fact that Bacon not only preserved his own

¹ F. L. von Ranke, *A History of England*, Oxford, 1875, I, 441, 455-9, 501; S. R. Gardiner, *A History of England from the Accession of James I to the Disgrace of Chief-Justice Coke, 1603-1616*, London, 1863 (innumerable references to Bacon's speeches); A. F. Pollard, *The History of England from the Accession of Edward VI to the Death of Elizabeth, 1547-1603*, London, 1910; F. C. Montague, *The History of England from the Accession of James I to the Restoration, 1603-1660*, London, 1907; G. M. Trevelyan, *England under the Stuarts*, London, 1922. See also J. R. Green, *History of the English People*, London and New York, 1900-3; A. D. Innes, *England under the Tudors*, London, 1905.

² Innes, *England under the Tudors*, p. 404.

³ Spedding, *Letters*, III, v-vi.

speeches, but was sufficiently interested in other orators of the House of Commons to keep a record of their utterances.¹

No one has supplied anything like a complete discussion of Bacon as a political speaker. Again and again, modern critics assure us that he possessed the power to sway audiences. In classifying Bacon's works, Steeves expresses what has been the general attitude towards the speeches:

Many speeches and legal papers come under this heading [Professional Works], but the consideration of these must be left until the more important literary works have our attention.²

Steeves's consideration of the speeches is brief and superficial. Other writers dismiss the subject of Bacon as speaker by telling us that he was "an orator of approved eloquence," or that "to his literary studies and attainments, he added a reputation as a statesman and orator," or that he was foremost among all the orators of his day.³ In very few instances do the recent commentators have anything more definite or informing on Bacon's speeches, or on his method of preparing and delivering them. They admit that he was an eloquent orator, and when this statement is expanded, the testimony employed takes the form of the celebrated commendation from his friend Ben Jonson:

There happened in my time one noble speaker who was full of gravity in his speaking; his language, where he could spare or pass by a jest, was nobly censorious. No man ever spake more neatly, more presly, more weightily, or suffered less emptiness, less idleness, in what he uttered. No member of his speech but consisted of his own graces. . . . He commanded where he spoke, and had his judges angry or pleased at his devotion. No man had their affections more in his power. The fear of every man who heard him was lest he should make an end.⁴

With this quotation, most of the commentators make an end. The same is true of the lesser biographers.⁵ Even Spedding, in his

¹ An interesting report of one of Salisbury's speeches was made by Bacon: Spedding, *Letters*, IV, 228 ff. For Bacon's reports of speeches, found in the Commons' Journals, see Spedding, *Letters*, III, 345.

² G. Walter Steeves, *Francis Bacon*, London, 1910, p. 54.

³ F. E. Schelling, *English Literature During the Lifetime of Shakespeare*, New York, 1910, p. 337; Edward Everett, *North American Review*, XVI (1823), 301; J. J. Jusserand, *Literary History of the English People*, London, 1909, II, 514.

⁴ Ben Jonson, *Timber or Discoveries*, ed. Schelling, Boston, 1892, p. 30.

⁵ John, Lord Campbell, *Life of Lord Bacon*, London, 1853; Charles de Remusat, *Bacon, sa Vie, son Temps, et son Influence jusqu'à nos Jours*, Paris, 1857; W. Hepworth Dixon, *Personal History of Lord Bacon*, Boston,

exhaustive biography, gives no connected account of Bacon's eloquence, though he has a number of scattered comments on the speeches and the speaking. Thus, when Bacon's name is mentioned, one usually thinks of the author of the *Advancement of Learning* and the *Essays*, not of the learned counsel, the astute politician, the discerning maker of speeches in Parliament. The student is left in the realm of speculation as to why Ben Jonson wrote so enthusiastically of Bacon's oratory. Why did Bacon have this fascination for his hearers? Were his speeches unique in their themes, structure, or content? In short, why was Bacon a great political orator? This is the question of the present essay.

Every orator must be studied in relation not only to the events but to the civilization of his time. In order to interpret more readily the rhetorical character of Bacon's speeches in Parliament, it may be well to mention, if only in a cursory manner, something of their general historical background. The spirit of the age in which Bacon was born has been described as one of aspiration:

It was an "experiencing" age. It loved sensation with the greediness of childhood; it intoxicated itself with Rabelais and Titian, with the gold of Peru and with the spices of the Orient. It was a daring age. Men stood bravely with Luther for spiritual liberty, or they gave their lives with Magellan to compass the earth or with Bruno to span the heavens. It was an age of aspiration. It dreamed with Erasmus of the time when men should be Christ-like, or with More of the place where they should be just; or with Michelangelo it pondered the meaning of sorrow, or with Montaigne it stored up daily wisdom. And of this time, bone of its bone and flesh of its flesh, was born the world's supreme poet with an eye to see the deepest and a tongue to tell the most of the human heart. Truly such a generation was not a poor, nor a backward one. Rather it was great in what it achieved, sublime in what it dreamed; abounding in ripe wisdom and in heroic deeds; full of light and of beauty and of life!¹

Such a picture stirs the imagination, conveys something of the fire and pulsating life of the sixteenth century.

What was the tenor of English political life during Bacon's youth, and his early years as a parliamentarian? Historians emphasize the absolutism of the Tudor sovereigns, their independence of Parliament, their direct control of the nation; and they point out that

1861; J. F. Foard, *The Life and Correspondence of Francis Bacon*, London, 1861; R. W. Church, *Life of Bacon*, New York, 1884; E. A. Abbott, *Francis Bacon*, London, 1885; John Nichol, *Francis Bacon, His Life and Philosophy*, Philadelphia, 1888.

¹ Preserved Smith, *The Age of the Reformation*, New York, 1920, p. 698.

the practice of absolutism, though not the theory of divine-right monarchy, had been gaining ground ever since the accession of Henry VII in 1485. Elizabeth had been the reigning sovereign for over a quarter of a century when Francis Bacon first became a member of the House of Commons. The Queen, even as the other Tudor monarchs, was popular with the rapidly increasing and powerful middle class. Occasionally, she humored the notions and fancies of her people; England was enjoying a period of unusual prosperity and national greatness; during her reign the English seamen drove back the Spanish Armada. A generous degree of calm and harmony prevailed in the world of politics, for Elizabeth was sufficiently strong to overcome sedition and other offences against the state. In 1576—just eight years before Bacon threw himself actively into the combat of the political field—Elizabeth's anger had been aroused by the utterances of one of her subjects. Peter Wentworth, a member of the Lower House, had delivered one of the earliest speeches recorded in behalf of the liberties of Parliament—and had been sent to the Tower. But such sentiments were rarely expressed in an environment where they might reach the ears of her Majesty.

Notwithstanding the tradition of absolutism which had flourished for more than a hundred years, England became in the seventeenth century the scene of a long and bitter contest. On one side were arrayed the forces of the king, the champions of the royal prerogative; while opposing them were the rapidly growing parliamentary factions. This is well explained by Professor Hayes:

The conflict between Parliament and the king, which had been avoided by the tactful Tudors, soon began in earnest when James I ascended the throne in 1603, with his exaggerated notion of his own authority. James I was an extravagant monarch, and needed parliamentary subsidies, yet his own pedantic principles prevented him from humoring Parliament in any dream of power. The inevitable result was a conflict for political supremacy between Parliament and king. When Parliament refused him money, James resorted to imposition of customs duties, grants of monopolies, sale of peerages, and the solicitation of "benevolences" (forced loans). Parliament promptly protested against such practices, as well as against his foreign and religious policies and against his absolute control of the appointment and operation of the judiciary. Parliament's protests only increased the wrath of the king.¹

¹ C. J. H. Hayes, *A Political and Social History of Modern Europe*, New York, 1921, I, 267.

An age of aspiration; a period of monarchical absolutism; a populace including a powerful and wealthy middle class; and, finally, a vigorous and protracted conflict between the sovereign and his parliament—here is presented a glimpse of the historical background of the England into which Bacon was born, lived, and performed his duties as a statesman, and exerted his influence as an eminent political orator.

One of the sources of Elizabeth's strength as a monarch lay in her ability to use not only nobles but commons as well in her government.¹ Elizabeth's closing years, and the first half-century of the Stuart régime, are remarkable for the birth of parliamentary personalities.

Indomitable audacity and an eminently practical shrewdness were characteristic of the men who were the hand and heart of England. Other qualities were needed for the brains which had to direct her policy; the patient common sense of Burghley, the keen penetration of Walsingham, the solid shrewdness of Nicholas Bacon, *vir pietate gravis*. The craftiness of the younger Cecil . . . marks a lower type of politician; not rare perhaps in Elizabeth's time, but not generally characteristic among her servants.²

These were the political figures who dominated the public life of England during Bacon's youth. In 1548 Burghley entered the arena as secretary to Somerset, and his service to the nation lasted for half a century. Especially distinguished was that part of his career from 1572 until his death in 1598, when he acted as the Queen's Lord High Treasurer. To exterminate Roman Catholicism was one of the central aims of Burghley's service to Elizabeth. When the Spanish Armada was defeated in 1588, he collaborated with the Queen in their policy, not to destroy, but rather to humiliate the Spanish power in Europe; for it was Burghley's purpose to have Spain continue as a factor in continental affairs, and thus to act as a counterpoise to France. Never did Burghley dominate Elizabeth; still, to the end of his life he remained her most trusted adviser. The Queen was confident that her minister's wisdom and loyalty, coupled with her own dexterity, would save the English nation from disaster.

Peace was his [Burghley's] object, and, if possible, the maintenance of the old Spanish alliance. For he always dreaded and distrusted France; and so in the latter part of the reign he is always the drag on the coach, and the

¹ Innes, *England under the Tudors*, pp. 5-6.

² *Ibid.*, p. 426.

enemy of the "rising generation," which came to regard him as a cynical old fogey.¹

Another important personality of Bacon's early life was Sir Francis Walsingham, Secretary of State from 1573 to 1590. Walsingham was instrumental in bringing about the trial and execution of Mary Queen of Scots. He was an ardent Puritan, who did much to encourage colonization in America.

Walsingham—a sincere Puritan, a man who never soiled his hands for private gain, who by his outspoken opposition to her political double-dealing provoked Elizabeth's anger more frequently than any other of her many outspoken advisers, of whom more than any other statesman of the day it might be said that he loved righteousness and hated iniquity—had yet the fault of the Puritan character, a certain remorselessness in dealing with the servants of the Scarlet Woman. . . . He more than any one else approved and fostered the revival of the illegal application of torture as a means of extorting information from recalcitrant prisoners. In this iniquity, however, it is fair to recognize that the rack and the boot were not employed wantonly but, as it would seem, honestly: with the single intention of obtaining true information for the unravelment of plots which endangered the public weal, and only on persons who were known to possess that information.²

Bacon's own father must have exerted a permanent effect on his son's public career. Sir Nicholas Bacon was a statesman who was known for his shrewdness and sagacity. He was the most prominent member of Elizabeth's first Parliament, and held the high post of Lord Keeper of the Great Seal from 1558 to his death in 1579. His influence in the government was second only to that of Burghley. Queen Elizabeth frequently visited him at his mansion at Gorhambury; and it is said that "she regarded him as the oracle of the laws, and, also, he amused her by many a witty word."³

Mention has been made of Sir Robert Cecil, later Earl of Salisbury. Scarcely can it be said that he is to be included as one of the outstanding political personages of Bacon's youth. A cousin to Francis Bacon, he was some four years his junior. As the younger son of Lord Burghley, he was trained by his father for the business of politics and diplomacy, becoming Secretary of State in 1596. He succeeded his father as chief adviser to Queen Elizabeth, and early won the confidence of James the First. His

¹ C. R. L. Fletcher, *An Introductory History of England*, London, 1912, II, 146.

² Innes, *England under the Tudors*, pp. 324-5.

³ Von Ranke, *History of England*, I, 338.

rapid and almost premature rise as a parliamentary personality and a powerful statesman, forms an interesting contrast with the slow and depressing struggle which Francis Bacon experienced in order to win a place of distinction and influence in the state. In this sense, Robert Cecil was a national figure long before his cousin achieved any substantial recognition from his sovereign.

Though far from great, Robert Cecil was by no means an unworthy man. . . . Though far from scrupulous, he was absolutely honest to his cause. . . . In everything he maintained the Elizabethan tradition, hostile to Spain without and to the Catholics within, but desirous of peace and unfavorable to the Puritans. This had been the school founded by his father, William Cecil, Lord Burghley, and to this the son would still have adhered though he had lived to be a hundred.¹

Another man who made his presence felt at this time was Sir Edward Coke. No study of Bacon's activities as a politician can be complete without making some mention of this acute, if on occasions unprincipled, legal mind. Less than ten years Bacon's senior, Coke owed his phenomenal rise to a position of national esteem to Burghley, who early looked with favor upon the great lawyer. In 1592 and 1593 Coke was Speaker of the House of Commons, and exerted his influence on the side of the Government in the very debate in which Francis Bacon took the more popular point of view. This was the question of subsidies, in the session of 1593. Bacon's speech on this occasion displeased the Queen, and thus gave to Coke the office of Attorney-General, an appointment which Bacon had been eager to obtain. This was the first event in a bitter and lifelong struggle between the two men. In the early years of James I's reign, Coke, as Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas, opposed the attempt on the part of the Chuch of England to free itself of the law of its own ecclesiastical courts. He attacked the King for his exaggerated notion of the royal prerogative, and negatived James's demand to legislate by proclamations. This battle with the Crown ended in Coke's losing the Chief Justiceship in 1616. Coke did not drop from public view, however, for as a member of Parliament, he closed his political life as a distinguished advocate of the liberties of the House of Commons.

In these brief sketches of Lord Burghley, Walsingham, Sir

¹ Trevelyan, *England under the Stuarts*, pp. 110-11.

Nicholas Bacon, Sir Robert Cecil, and Sir Edward Coke, the reader will catch a glimpse of the political aims and national spirit of the great parliamentary personalities of England during Francis Bacon's youth, and of some of his contemporaries in the Lower House. One might refer again to the heroic pugnacity of Peter Wentworth, who championed the cause of parliamentary liberty in the session of 1576, and who may be thought of as the representative of a domestic issue which was to increase in importance.

After the first quarter of the sixteenth century, the professions into which the sons of the nobility and the wealthy upper class might enter, were increasing in number. In addition to the life of the soldier, the young noble could prepare himself for the pursuit of courtier, or a career of diplomacy. Again, the church and the law attracted men of rank and breeding.

One sign of the break-up of the old medieval castes was the new classification of men by calling, or profession. It is true that two of the professions, the higher offices in army and church, became appanages of the nobility, and the other liberal vocations were almost as completely monopolized by the children of the moneyed middle class; nevertheless it is significant that there were new roads by which men might rise. No class has profited more by the evolution of ideas than has the intelligentsia.¹

Francis Bacon was born to unusual opportunities. His father was a keen lawyer, an ardent supporter of and believer in sound education, and a man high in the councils of the Queen. His mother was a woman of exceptional ability and intelligence. She was the daughter of Sir Anthony Cook, tutor to King Edward the Sixth. His uncle, Lord Burghley, was the chief minister of the crown. Dr. Rawley, Bacon's first biographer, has made this observation:

His birth and other capacities qualified him above others of his profession to have ordinary accesses at court, and to come frequently into the Queen's eye, who would often grace him with private and free communication, not only about matters of his profession or business in law, but also about the arduous affairs of state; from whom she received from time to time great satisfaction.²

When Sir Nicholas Bacon died in 1579, Francis was compelled to turn to a profession which would afford him a chance to earn a living. A young man of eighteen, he was perplexed for the

¹ Preserved Smith, *The Age of the Reformation*, pp. 492-3.

² Rawley's *Life*, reprinted in A. S. Cook's edition of Bacon's *Advancement of Learning*, Book I, Boston and London, 1904, p. xiv.

moment. He had wished to fit himself for the life of a courtier and diplomat, but lack of financial support necessitated that he cast this idea aside for the time at least. He might have hoped that political preferment would be secured for him by the influence of his powerful uncle and cousin; but the Cecils did little to aid their kinsman in gaining the good will and bounty of the reigning monarch. This seems especially strange in the case of a man of Francis Bacon's intellectual prowess. Burghley may well have distrusted Bacon for his very affluence of ideas, which, to the seasoned statesman, may have conveyed the impression of scholastic pedantry. Bacon always believed that Robert Cecil was envious of his talents. It is not improbable that the latter shared Burghley's mental attitude, and regarded his cousin as a visionary.¹ For whatever reasons, Bacon had little aid from his relatives. He set himself to the practical business of the study of the law. It is clear from Dr. Rawley's account, that Bacon looked on this as an accessory to the wider vocation of politics.² He professed the law, although his heart and soul were bound up in the affairs of state.

In Francis Bacon were united qualities which rarely assert themselves in any single person. He was a true son of the Renaissance; he longed for power, for adventure, for a wide variety of experience. There were periods in his life when he seems to have been the typical student, the enthusiastic investigator, who finds his solace in pure research. An accomplished scholar, he could write in Latin, French, and Italian as well as he could in English; and his intellectual interests were manifold. However, his restless soul could never have obtained complete satisfaction in the cloister of academic calm and speculation. He was eager for the truth at all costs; and, endowed with a glorious intellect, he was confident that knowledge is power. The relation between the two elements in Bacon's character has been well expressed by Professor Skemp:

The ultimate aim of his philosophy was to govern Nature; and the governing temper, fostered by a boyhood passed among statesmen, could not turn away from practical affairs. "Only the dull are modest," and Bacon knew his own powers. He wished to use them in the service of his country and of mankind, but he wanted more than the mere joy of service. His desire not only for power, but also for the pomp and circumstance of power, was instinctive and unappeasable.³

¹ Gardiner, *History of England, 1603-1616*, I, 182-3.

² Rawley's *Life*, p. xiii.

³ A. R. Skemp, *Francis Bacon*, London, no date, pp. 12-13.

With this view of Bacon's cast of mind, of his family fortunes, and of the political life of his day, we may turn to the stages of his career. In 1584, as a young lawyer, Bacon was first elected a member of the House of Commons. Altogether, he was elected to Parliament eight times, and his career in the Lower House covered the thirty years between 1584 and 1614—the last nineteen years of Elizabeth's reign and the first eleven years of James the First. Bacon had attained prominence at the bar and in the House before he rose to important position in the government. His political preferment he owed to James, who first bestowed a knighthood (1603), then made him successively Solicitor-General (1607), Attorney-General (1613), Keeper of the Great Seal (1617), and finally Lord High Chancellor and a peer of the realm (1618). And at various intervals of this busy public life, Bacon published his works in literature, history, science, and philosophy, as well as numerous pamphlets and letters on political questions.

It is with but one aspect of this career that we are to concern ourselves—Bacon's art as a rhetorician: his skill in influencing men by speech. Professor Mair has written epigrammatically: "Bacon could well count himself a master in the art of managing men, and *Human Nature and How to Manage It* would be a good title for his book of *Essays*."¹ Bacon did more than speculate on the mysterious motives that move men; he did more than produce a textbook in psychology; he was what Carlyle would term an active practitioner. His mastery over his colleagues in the House, as committeeman, framer of state papers, skilled speaker and dialectician, was unanimously acknowledged. As testimony we have the impression made upon a great contemporary, Sir Walter Raleigh. The quotation is taken from Dr. Rawley's *Life of Bacon*:

I will only set down what I heard Sir Walter Raleigh once speak of him by way of comparison (whose judgment may well be trusted), *That the Earl of Salisbury* [Bacon's cousin, Sir Robert Cecil], *was an excellent speaker, but no good penman; that the Earl of Northampton (the Lord Henry Howard), was an excellent penman, but no good speaker; but that Sir Francis Bacon was eminent in both.*²

¹G. H. Mair, *History of English Literature*, London and New York, 1911, p. 100.

²Rawley's *Life*, p. xvii.

II

Of the speeches which necessarily accompanied such a career as Francis Bacon's, we have a considerable body of material. The forensic arguments of which a record survives outnumber the deliberative; but with the former we are not here directly concerned. Of the deliberative speeches, it is impossible to say without qualification that any survive to us exactly as delivered, for Bacon's practice in general, and especially in his later years, was to write out the full speech only after its delivery. This he did either for his own records or for his friends. The authenticity of the speeches is vouched for by Spedding, who printed them either from manuscripts in Bacon's hand or else from manuscripts bearing corrections in Bacon's hand. In addition to the speeches which survive in manuscript, the Parliamentary Journals give fragmentary reports¹ of a still larger number; these indicate at least the occasions on which Bacon spoke, and, sometimes, his line of argument. But a sufficient number of the manuscript speeches bear internal evidence of essential completeness to make the rhetorical study of them profitable.

It has been said that there are two conditions, apart from mere superficial display, which are essential to the production of great oratory: "There must be, first, the stir of popular life associated with free institutions; and there must be, second, some kind of moral question at issue. Pure democracy is not necessary to oratory."² The reader has seen that when Bacon entered the arena of public affairs, national institutions were beginning to feel the pulse of life and freedom. This opened the way for new discussions. Vital issues came to the fore. The individual began to realize certain

¹ "These are so disjointed and fragmentary that it will be a question with many, whether they ought to have been included in a work of this kind. It was a question with myself. But as I believe them to be genuine fragments of his speeches, taken down at the time as fast as a not very ready writer could follow; and as the proceedings of Parliament were so important a part of the business of the time, and Bacon so important an actor in them; and as I have myself learned from these fragmentary and disjointed notes so much about his political life which I could not have learned either from summary accounts or extracts; I thought it better to print all that there are, and so bring the whole of the evidence within reach of everybody." Spedding, *Letters*, III, v-vi.

² William Clarke, *Political Orations*, London and Toronto, no date, preface.

duties to himself, the state, and his fellowmen. It is apparent that Bacon's speeches owe much of their greatness to this new impetus behind the social, economic, and political life of the English people. What is to be said of the second of our requirements, "some kind of moral question at issue"? Do these speeches deal with any important moral problems?

Bacon possessed the virtues of tolerance and real charity, but, as Nichol suggests, "He was never disposed to stretch abstractions against a present good to the State."¹ As an advocate of the Union of Scotland with England, Bacon's arguments had less to do with the immediate wishes of the peoples of the two countries, than with the desirability of strengthening the kingdom, so that Great Britain might ever be a force to be reckoned with in the progress of the world. Although Utility plays a leading part in most of his arguments on all public questions, yet there are constant appeals to Honor, Justice, and Conscience.² In his eyes, the sovereignty of the monarch and the liberties of Parliament actually became moral issues. Note the tone of only one of his speeches:

That private men should undertake for the Commons of England! Why a man mought as well undertake for the four elements. It is a thing so giddy and so vast, as cannot enter into the brain of a sober man.³

This passage is taken from the introduction; in the remainder of the speech Bacon reduces this whole matter of undertaking to an ethical basis. That the English House of Commons should be "packed" by a body of selfish persons, who expected to ingratiate themselves with the King by seeing that his Majesty's business passed the House—all of this was, to Bacon, more than an offence against the state, it was a keen ethical problem; in fact, for him, any crime directed against the Throne or the Parliament was a violation of the moral code.

If we turn to his legal arguments and Star Chamber Charges, we are impressed again and again, that the fountainhead of these discourses is some kind of moral issue. This is demonstrated in Bacon's Charge against Oliver St. John, for scandalizing and tra-

¹ John Nichol, *Francis Bacon, His Life and Philosophy*, p. 79.

² *E.g.*, Speech on Behalf of the Commons to the Lords, Urging the Upper House to Unite with the Lower House in Order to Petition the King for Wards and Tenures, March 8, 1610, Spedding, *Letters*, IV, 163-7.

³ Speech in the Lower House, When the House was in Great Heat about the Undertakers, April, 1614, Spedding, *Letters*, V, 42-8.

ducing in the Public Sessions letters sent from the Lords of the Council touching the King's Benevolence.¹ Here the speaker points out that St. John had publicly, in the face of the King's ministers and justices, maliciously slandered the King; the law of the land; the Parliament; and infinite particulars of the subjects of the King. Nay, the slander was of that nature, that it might seem to interest the people in grief and discontent against the State. Although a legal argument, it has deliberative significance. With ethical fire, Bacon tells us that the King has certain obligations to his subjects; the subjects, in turn, owe certain debts to the Sovereign; and any person or circumstance which tends to break down this mutual relationship and confidence, is traitorous in the extreme. Grounded in philosophy as Bacon was, and trained in the law, it was natural for him to emphasize the ethical aspect of constitutional questions.

What did Bacon discuss when he spoke in Parliament? Had he any favorite ideas which appear regularly throughout the speeches? What political policy did he champion? Bacon spoke in public for thirty years—did his topics change during that time?

In the debates in the House of Commons in the later years of Elizabeth's reign, Bacon spoke on the question of Supply, 1593; Subsidies, 1593 and 1598; Against Abuses in Weights and Measures, 1601; In Favor of Repealing Superfluous Laws, 1601; Against the Repeal of an Act Relating to Charitable Trusts, 1601. When James the First ascended the throne, Bacon's activity in the House debates and other parliamentary matters increased. We have his speeches Touching Purveyors, 1604; On the Union of England and Scotland, 1604 to 1607; For Wards and Tenures, 1610; Advising the Commons Not to Dispute the King's Right to Lay Impositions upon Merchandises, 1610; On Behalf of the Commons, Presenting to his Majesty a Written Copy of their Grievances, 1610; Persuading Supply for his Majesty, 1610 and 1614; Against the Undertakers, 1614; In Reply to the Speaker's Oration, 1621; In Favor of a War with Spain, 1624.

In the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle speaks of the ends of the deliberative orator as expediency or injury:

For if he exhorts to a particular line of action, he recommends it as being better, *i.e.*, *more advantageous*, if he dissuades from it, he does so on the ground that it is worse, and every other consideration, whether justice

¹ Charge against Oliver St. John, Delivered in the Star Chamber, 1615, Spedding, *Letters*, V, 136-46.

or injustice, honor or disgrace, he embraces merely as something secondary and subservient to this.¹

This presents the best statement of the aims of Bacon's political speeches. Likewise, a glance at the matter discussed shows the reader that Bacon spoke upon those subjects which Aristotle enumerates as being the most important subjects of general deliberation and deliberative oratory. These include finance, war and peace, the defense of the country, imports and exports.² The greater number of these speeches have to do with the economic complexities of exporting and importing, finance, and the subjects of legislation in their broadest aspects. War and peace, and national defense, Bacon approaches with the lawyer's precision, his love for order and precedent. In fact, those speeches which have been preserved for us *in toto* deal with parliamentary bills and measures which would attract the speaker with a legal mind and training. Many of these speeches could have been made only by such a person, for they demanded the substantial logic and reasoning power of the politician whose education is fundamentally based upon a knowledge of law and jurisprudence.

It is not our intention here to make a detailed exposition of Bacon's "topics" in the classical sense. A thorough analysis of the speeches will show that Bacon used rhetorical "commonplaces," both general and particular. Furthermore, whether or not he consciously followed Aristotle's treatment of topics,³ one feels that here, too, he owed much to the rhetorical principles so admirably set down by the ancient Greek scholar. The common topics of degree, possibility or impossibility, occur throughout the speeches, whether they be epideictic, forensic, or deliberative in character.

Had Bacon any favorite ideas which appear regularly throughout his speeches? This is the next question which we shall try to answer. Throughout his speeches in Parliament, both early and late in life, Bacon insists that no greater benefit could be conferred on the Commonwealth than a general revision in the whole body of laws,

¹ *Rhetoric*, tr. Weldon, London, 1886, p. 23. On the subject of Expediency, see especially Bacon's Speeches on the Union of Scotland with England; Spedding, *Letters*, III, 191-2; 201-2; 307-25; 318; 335-41. This is dealt with very clearly in the Speech Concerning the Article of Naturalization, the topic of the speech being one of policy, expediency, and expediency (Spedding, *Letters*, III, 307-25). See also the speech on the policy towards Ireland, Spedding, *Letters*, VI, 205-6.

² *Rhetoric*, p. 27.

³ *Rhetoric*, pp. 20-1, 175-80.

and the reduction of them into one consistent and manageable code. During Elizabeth's reign, he made a speech in the Lower House, in Favor of Repealing Superfluous Laws:

Laws are like pills all gilt over, which if they be easily and well swallowed down are neither bitter in digestion nor hurtful to the body. Every man knows that time is the true controller of laws. . . . I could therefore wish . . . that there might be a committee for the repeal of divers statutes, and for divers superfluous branches of statutes. And that every particular member of this House would give information to the Committees what statutes he thinketh fitting to be repealed, or what branch to be superfluous; lest, as he sayeth. . . . the more laws we make the more snares we lay to entrap ourselves.¹

Six years later, Bacon spoke against a motion Concerning the Union of Laws, saying in effect: It will be necessary to recompile and review our own laws; this reviewing and recompiling of the laws is the most politic, most honorable, and most beneficial work his Majesty could perform for his subjects for all ages. In the course of the same speech, he observed, "This continual heaping of laws without digesting them, maketh a chaos and confusion, and turneth the laws many times to become but snares for the people."²

In 1621, Bacon as Lord Chancellor made a speech in Parliament, in Reply to the Speaker's Oration. The old question comes to the fore:

Laws are things proper for Parliament; and therefore therein ye are rather to lead, than to be led. Do not multiply or accumulate laws more than ye need. A multiplicity of laws do but ensnare and entangle the people. Rather, ye should revive good laws that are fallen and discontinued, or provide against the slack execution of laws which are already in force.³

It has already been suggested that Bacon had the virtues of a sound charity and tolerance. In his speeches, he made an effort to conciliate and reconcile conflicting parties in the State. This forms an equally characteristic note of the political addresses. When the merchants were discontented, a bill was brought forward in the Lower House, on behalf of a Policy of Assurance of the Safety

¹ Spedding, *Letters*, III, 19 ff.

² Spedding, *Letters*, III, 335-41.

³ Spedding, *Letters*, VII, 174-9. Not alone did Bacon speak in favor of fewer new laws, and a careful revision of the old; he also wrote letters and pamphlets around the same theme. One of the most interesting of the latter is *An Offer to the King of a Digest to Be Made of the Laws of England*, 1622. Spedding, *Letters*, VII, 358 ff.

of Goods for Merchants, 1601. Bacon vigorously championed this bill: "The Bill will tend to the comfort of the merchant, who is the stomach of the realm."¹ In the same year, he vigorously opposed the Repeal of an Act Relating to Charitable Trusts: "We should do a most uncharitable action to repeal and subvert such a mount of charity."² As Lord Keeper, Bacon in 1617 made an address to Sir William Jones, upon his Calling to be Lord Chief Justice of Ireland. This speech affords some inkling of the foreign policy which Bacon would have adopted towards that unfortunate island:

Most important of all, proceed regularly and constantly, and yet with temperance and equality, in matters of religion. Otherwise, Ireland civil will become more dangerous to us than Ireland savage.³

Bacon advocated tolerance in judicial matters when speaking, as Lord Chancellor, to Mr. Whitelocke, when the latter became Chief Justice of Chester, June 29, 1620. He urged resolution to accomplish the mission, but "resolution tempered by moderation."⁴ This plea for conciliation, moderation, and temperance is a marked characteristic of those pamphlets and letters dealing with the dispute between the High Churchmen and the Puritans, as well as a recurring idea in Bacon's forensic and deliberative orations.

Bacon played an important rôle in the political problems aggravated by the talk of the Union of Scotland with England. When James Stuart came to the English throne, this became a vexing issue for several years. No man saw sooner or more clearly than Bacon, that Scotland, well united with England, had all natural requirements for becoming one of the greatest monarchies in the world. To quote Spedding's words:

But Bacon knew that things would not unite by being merely put together, and that perfect mixture required many conditions, of which *time* was one of the most indispensable.⁵

To mollify the King's impatience, and to develop the sympathy of Parliament, Bacon discussed the issues in several tracts and speeches, which are among his most scholarly productions.⁶

¹ Spedding, *Letters*, III, 34 ff.

² Spedding, *Letters*, III, 38-9.

³ Spedding, *Letters*, VI, 205-6.

⁴ Spedding, *Letters*, VII, 104 ff.

⁵ Spedding, *Letters*, III, 89.

⁶ See note 1, p. 106, above.

As mediator between the Crown and the Commons, Bacon displayed unusual political acuteness. He had notions of his own of the relations which existed between the Sovereign and the Parliament in a monarchy. He believed it to be the first purpose of Parliament to make laws and provide for the machinery of government, not merely to vote money to the Crown. This resulted in his estrangement from Elizabeth; it also provoked one of his most direct criticisms of King James. The King was not to look upon Parliament as a money-voting body only, which could be made to please the royal whims. This pungent passage is found in a letter written to his Majesty, early in the year 1614: "If your Majesty be resolved not to buy and sell this Parliament, but to perform the part of a King, and not of a merchant or contractor."¹

Bacon held it for a point of constitutional doctrine that between the sovereign and the people in a monarchy there was a tie of *mutual* obligation; the sovereign by advice and consent of Parliament making laws for the benefit of the people, and the people by their representatives in Parliament supplying the wants of the sovereign; therefore the voting of money should never be the *sole* cause of calling Parliament, but always accompanied with some other business of state tending to the good of the commonwealth.²

This comment from the pen of Mr. Spedding was suggested specifically by one of Bacon's earliest recorded utterances in the House of Commons, a speech in the debate on Supply, 1593.³ Although he favored a Supply to the Queen, yet Bacon proceeded to discuss laws. If the House voted Supply, the Sovereign, in turn, should remember the laws. The cause of the assembling of all Parliaments hath been heretofore for laws or money. Money should not be granted unless the laws receive attention.

The prerogative of the Sovereign, the liberties of Parliament, and the interrelation of the two—this topic is considered in at least one-half of Bacon's speeches which have been passed down to us. A few examples will serve for illustration.

For the Prerogative royal of the Prince, for my own part I ever allowed of it; and it is such as I hope I shall never see discussed. The Queen, as she is our Sovereign, hath both an enlarging and restraining liberty of her Prerogative.⁴

¹ Spedding, *Letters*, V, 1-2.

² Spedding, *Letters*, I, 213.

³ Spedding, *Letters*, I, 213-14.

⁴ Speech against a Bill for the Explanations of the Common Law in Certain Cases of Letters Patents, 1601, Spedding, *Letters*, III, 26-7.

Although a remedy is desired, yet we do not intend to derogate in any way from your Majesty's Prerogative, nor to touch or question any of your Majesty's regalities or rights. We seek only the reformation of abuses, and the execution of former laws whereunto we are born.¹

The King's Sovereignty and the Liberty of Parliament are as the two elements and principles of this estate. . . . They do not cross or destroy the one the other, but they strengthen and maintain the one the other. . . . Take away Liberty of Parliament, the griefs of the subject will bleed inwards; and this may endanger the Sovereignty itself. . . . If the King's Sovereignty receive any degree of contempt with us who are born under an hereditary monarchy, we shall come speedily to confusion and dissolution.²

As a final example of this recurring theme in Bacon's political speeches, we may offer a statement of the sense of a passage in the Lord Chancellor's Reply to the Speaker's Oration, 1621³:

It is well to commend the institution of Parliament. Although Monarchy is the more ancient form of government; and although it be independent, yet by the advice and assistance of Parliament it is the stronger and surer built. When the King sits in Parliament, and his Prelates, Peers and Commons attend him, he is in the exaltation of his orb.

Of Bacon's political theory and policy, we shall write briefly. The explanatory excerpts from his speeches justify certain deductions. In the contacts between the monarch and the legislative assembly, anything that savored of a mercenary character was to be wholly avoided. As we perceived, the word "supply" displeased him because of its unfortunate connotation. As Abbott suggests, Bacon preferred to speak "of the King's need of *treasure*."⁴ For Bacon, the various classes forming the body politic—Clergy, Peers, and Commons—should be called together at regular intervals by the Sovereign, so that all might learn and graciously consider the royal plans for the benefit and progress of the kingdom. It would be the privilege of the Commons, in turn, to present their own desires and grievances. Bacon was an ardent supporter of the King's prerogative, and the liberties of Parliament, but only in so

¹ This is a paraphrase of the opening of Bacon's Speech (On Behalf of the Commons), when he presented a Petition Touching Purveyors, made to the King in the Withdrawing Chamber at Whitehall, April 27, 1604, Spedding, *Letters*, III, 181-7.

² Speech in the Lower House, Persuading the House to Desist from Farther Question of Receiving the King's Messages by Their Speaker, etc., 1610, Spedding, *Letters*, IV, 177-9.

³ Spedding, *Letters*, VII, 174-9.

⁴ *Essays*, ed. E. A. Abbott, London, 1886, I, cxviii.

far as the one counterbalanced the other. He concerned himself with the degree to which the Sovereign and the higher executive officials might safely go in the direction of self-interest, and to what degree the principle of self-interest must be subordinated to the wider interests of the people ruled. It is sufficiently evident that Cromwellian democracy finds very little to foretell it in the speeches of Francis Bacon. It has been well observed:

A state of things in which the Commons should be supreme would have been to Bacon a revelation of political chaos, a confusion worse confounded. To Bacon the idea that the affairs of a great nation should be controlled, and its policy dictated, by a miscellaneous collection of country gentlemen, lawyers, and merchants, would have been ridiculous.¹

In the *New Atlantis*, Bacon pictures for us his utopia. In this vision of the ideal state, the general end of human happiness can best be attained in three different ways: good laws, good morality, and mechanical inventions. As a philosopher, Bacon was a utilitarian, and one would judge that his highest good was the greatest happiness of the greatest number. So in his political theory and practice, Bacon aimed to make England a better state in which to live. To the writer, it would seem that this is the keynote of all his political utterances. Fewer and better laws, well enforced; a happy Union of Scotland with England; the civilization of Ireland; the abolition of the last remnants of feudal oppression: these were among the causes to which he devoted his life as a statesman. In his essay, "Of Great Place," we are told that the only legitimate object of aspiration is "power to do good." To quote from Professor Macmillan:

It is evident that Bacon regarded human happiness as the great end to which all human effort ought to be directed. The ultimate end of all knowledge was, he taught, "the benefit and use of man" and "the relief of man's estate," by which he meant the diminution of human misery, the promotion of human happiness.²

And Professor Gardiner, in writing of Bacon's political thought and action, speaks to the same effect: "The object which he set before him was the benefit of mankind."³

¹ Professor James Rowley in *The Living Age*, CXXXIX (1878), 91 ff. The lecture is reprinted from *Fraser's Magazine* XCVIII (1878).

² M. Macmillan, *International Journal of Ethics*, XVII (1906-7), 60-1.

³ S. R. Gardiner, *History of England, 1603-1616*, II, 114-27. The historian here furnishes an admirable commentary on Bacon's political theory and its

Bacon sat in Parliament for over thirty years, as a member of the House of Commons, or of the Lords. Did the topics of his speeches alter very markedly during that time? Are there any radical changes of policy? We know that when Elizabeth was on the throne, he made it his purpose to bring the Commons from a state of stagnation to a higher level, where they became something more than a machine for voting revenue. He did much to awaken the Lower House to a sense of its real significance, and to assert its position as a legislative body. Most of his political speeches are colored with this idea.

Parliament grew stronger and stronger, realizing its power to control subsidies and supply. This alarmed Bacon; he feared for the King's prerogative. He showed himself a more ardent supporter of the Crown. This change of policy is apparent in the speeches which he delivered during the session of 1610, and in the years which followed. The explanation is not difficult. Bacon was no democrat, as we understand the term; he believed in the liberties of Parliament, but he believed, also, in the prerogative of the Sovereign. From the day when he first entered the House of Commons, he appears to have made it his policy to steer a middle course in things political; to have attempted to mediate between the Parliament and the Throne. The opinion that his change of position was not inconsistent with his principles, and was no evidence of insincerity, has been confirmed by Professor Nichol:

He assumed the attitude he always, with modifications, steadfastly in the main preserved, that of a moderate reformer in secular matters, in religious an advocate of modified tolerance to both extremes—Puritan and Romanist—on either side of the *Via Media*. Doubtless he leant more to the former at the beginning than towards the close of his career; the change may be accounted for by the waning influence of family ties, the increasingly difficult demands of the Nonconformists, and Bacon's own, sincere as well as politic, increasing attachment to the Court.¹

Bacon has been censured for fawning on the Court, because he sought material recognition for his own abilities at a time when the monarch was disposed in his favor. The charge must rest on his language to the King rather than on his justifiable defense of a relation to the events of the time. The same subject is considered by J. M. Robertson, *Contemporary Review*, CII (1912), 338-49; F. J. C. Hearnshaw, *Contemporary Review*, CXXIII (1923), 606-14. See also: *Fraser's Magazine*, LXXIX (1869), 749 ff.; *Saturday Review*, LIX (1885), 761-2.

¹ John Nichol, *Francis Bacon, His Life and Philosophy*, p. 36.

weakened prerogative. In the first book of the *Advancement of Learning*,¹ Bacon writes of an ardent student of philosophy, who reproved Aristippus that he would offer the profession of philosophy such an indignity, as for a private suit to fall at a tyrant's feet; but he answered, "It was not his fault, but it was the fault of Dionysius, that had his ears in his feet." If, in his later speeches, Bacon seems to flatter the King, and fawn upon the Royal House, one feels that he appreciated the truth that James's ears were in his feet.

Furthermore, Bacon feared for the consequences, when he beheld the growth of parliamentary independence. He saw the handwriting on the wall; he must have guessed at the impending doom of the monarchy. Whether he thought of civil war and the execution of a sovereign, is open to conjecture. Still, his speeches indicate that it was just such a state of affairs which he wished to prevent. It was for this reason that he urged a foreign war. It would divert the attention of the Commons, and perhaps bring them into fuller sympathy with the ruling house. In some ways, it would appear that he regarded war as an essential in national life; at least it had advantages. On these grounds, he had favored a Motion of Subsidy to Queen Elizabeth in 1598.² In one of his essays, he writes:

No body can be healthful without exercise, neither natural body nor politic: and certainly to a kingdom or an estate a just and honorable war is the true exercise. A civil war, indeed, is like the heat of a fever; but a foreign war is like the heat of exercise, and serveth to keep the body in health; for in a slothful peace both courages will effeminate and manners corrupt.³

And the notes of his last political speech, prepared for delivery in Parliament, March 1, 1624, explain his views Concerning a War with Spain.⁴ It is not hard to read between the lines, and catch the significance of the content. A war with Spain might tend to bring the Commons and the Sovereign together in mutual obligation; war might heal the growing dissensions festering among Parliamentarians and Royalists; in other words, war with Spain

¹ *Works*, VI, 116. The same fable is included as number 86 of the *Apothegms New and Old*, *ibid.*, XIII, 348.

² Spedding, *Letters*, II, 85 ff.

³ "Of Kingdoms and Estates."

⁴ Spedding, *Letters*, VII, 460-5.

might bring to the citizens of England, the greatest good to the greatest number.

If the tone of Bacon's speeches changes, during the closing years of his life in Parliament, it does not indicate a weakness of character or an inconsistency in his political theory and practice. There never was a time when he did not believe in the royal prerogative. His speeches clearly show that he approved a powerful monarchy resting on the support of the people, serving the popular good, and informed and advised by a *loyal* Parliament.

III

Critics have had much to say about the style of Bacon's literary works in general, and the *Essays* in particular. One might easily devote many pages to the style of the political speeches as examples of the English of the period. It was a period which did not yet completely recognize English prose as a literary vehicle, although it had advanced to a point at which the ornamented style typified by *Euphuës* had captured the fancy of many—and repelled others. As between the relatively simple prose of Ascham and Hooker and the ornate style of Lyly, Bacon chose the former. He subscribed to Thomas Wilson's severe attack on the euphuistic habits of speech which flourished at the time. Wilson condemned the prevalent impurities of style, such as an excess of alliteration, and the custom of throwing prose into metre, "making their talk rather to appear rhymed metre than serene plaine speache."¹

"But it was not for the sake of style that Bacon studied style," points out Professor Grierson. "He recognized how frequently 'the greatest orators . . . by observing their well-graced forms of speech, lose the volubility of application.' He condemned the Ciceronians of the Renaissance who 'began to hunt more after words than matter, and more after the choiceness of the phrase, and the round and clear composition of the sentence, and the sweet falling of clauses, and the varying and illustration of their works with tropes and figures, than after the weight of matter, worth of subject, soundness of argument, life of invention, and depth of judgment.'

¹ *Wilson's Arte of Rhetorique 1560*, ed. G. H. Mair, Oxford, 1909, pp. xxviii-xxx, 2, 106, 203.

Style to Bacon is an instrument of power—a means by which to commend his policy to statesmen and sovereigns.”¹

One cannot read Bacon's speeches without feeling that he was an orator who accounted words but subservient and auxiliary to matter. He never plays on words; neither does one find highly ornate sentences and phrases. One would judge that he considered these only to be digressions which interfere with the clarity of the expression and the inner truth of the subject at hand. Here is a typical passage from one of Bacon's own speeches; we may readily conclude what he thought of the euphuists:

And this I shall do, my Lords, *in verbis masculis*; no flourishing or painted words, but such words as are fit to go before deeds.²

Distaste for “flourishing or painted words” is to be expected in one who found in the Bible the animating influence which filled all of his speeches and writings. Bacon was saturated with Holy Writ; literally every page of his orations has quotations from the Vulgate and the English Bible. Hear what he wrote in a Prayer or Psalm, about April 18, 1621:

Heavenly Father, Thy creatures have been my books,
But Thy Scriptures much more.³

Sophistical subtleties are absent from Bacon's speeches. True enough, he knew, as no other writer in English, how to take up the material of a flowing style and condense it into a few apothegms, whose sharp and vigorous brevity seems to strike the intellect with the force of an arrow. This is well shown in the following aphoristic sentences,⁴ which occur in the political speeches:

There is never a gentleman that hath overreached himself in expense, and thereby must abate his countenance, but he will rather travel, and do it abroad, than at home.

The time past is a pattern of the time to come.

For *Nemo subito fingitur*: the conversations of minds are not so swift as the conversations of times.

¹ H. J. C. Grierson, *The First Half of the Seventeenth Century*, Edinburgh and London, 1906, p. 205.

² Speech on Taking His Seat in Chancery, When He Received the Great Seal of England, May 7, 1617, Spedding, *Letters*, VI, 183.

³ Spedding, *Letters*, VII, 229-30. See the opening of Bacon's Charge against Sir John Wentworth, in the Star Chamber, Nov. 10, 1615 (*Ibid.*, V, 214).

⁴ Spedding, *Letters*, III, 311; 311; 340; IV, 179; III, 19; 18; 19; IV, 292.

It is one use of wit to make clear things doubtful. But it is a much better use of wit to make doubtful things clear; and to that I would men would bend themselves.

The more laws we make the more snares we lay to entrap ourselves.

I take it far better to scour a stream than turn a stream.

Better it is to venture a man's credit by speaking than to stretch a man's conscience by silence.

All passions are assuaged with time: love, hatred, grief, all; fire itself burns out with time, if no new fuel be put to it.

A glance at the contexts will show that each of these sentences, by its epigrammatic point, enforces the meaning Bacon seeks to convey. But they do more than please the ear and vivify the argument. When they are broken open, these passages will be found to overflow with truth and wisdom. One feels that in every instance, Bacon uses no word without a distinct idea of what it means to himself, and also, of the impression which it will convey to the persons addressed. In the opening chapter of his *Poetics*, Scaliger continually emphasizes the thought that a modicum of wisdom far excels the best skill in speaking. This admirably characterizes Bacon's personal attitude towards oratorical style:

The soul of persuasion is truth, truth either fixed and absolute, or susceptible of question. . . . Truth, in turn, is agreement between that which is said about a thing and the thing itself. By no means are we to accept the popular idea that eloquent speaking, rather than persuasion, is the end of oratory, for the arguments of the grammarians on this point are not valid. . . . One uses eloquence that he may persuade.¹

Not alone did Bacon use the aphorism as a rhetorical device in his own speaking; but he laid it down as a good principle for others to follow:

The aphorism trieth the writer, whether he be superficial or solid: for aphorisms, except they should be ridiculous, cannot be made but of the pith and heart of sciences: for discourse of illustration is cut off. . . . No man will attempt to write aphorisms, but he that is sound and grounded.²

It is altogether likely that the pithy sayings and epigrams which occur so frequently in Bacon's speeches find their source, if not

¹ F. M. Padelford, *Select Translations from Scaliger's Poetics*, New York, 1905, pp. 3-4.

² *Advancement of Learning*, bk. ii, *Works*, VI, 291.

entirely, at least in part, in Greek and Latin originals. Few English orators have exhibited more enthusiasm for collecting sentences from the classic writers than did Bacon. With him it was a hobby to gather proverbs, quotations, apt sayings, examples, illustrations, and anecdotes. And, as Dean Church observes,¹ it would seem that Bacon must have read sometimes for the sheer joy of bringing together effective words and suitable phrases. This suggests another patent quality of Bacon's oratorical style. Not only do his speeches abound in epigrammatic passages; they also contain a vast number of quotations, used with force as rhetorical authorities. But these quotations are always brief and pointed, and thus in harmony with Bacon's own style.

To what degree have the orators of any age been influenced by the poets and dramatists of their own period? The question is an interesting one, and especially interesting with regard to the orators of the later Elizabethan period. Here we may deal with it only as it affects Bacon. For upwards of a quarter of a century both Bacon and Shakespeare walked the streets of the English capital, and it is probable that each was personally unknown to the other.² Bacon was by no means a Puritanical person, but actors had no social position; hence it is not strange that he—the nephew of Lord Burghley, and later himself the Keeper of the Great Seal of England—should have few friends among the players.

In Bacon's speeches, there is not only an absence of quotation from the Elizabethan dramatists; there is likewise little theatrical color in his metaphors and analogies. He was fond of figurative language; his speech is constantly clothed in it. Still, in the whole body of his orations, there are but two or three figures drawn from the life of the playhouses; nor are these very complimentary:

Ye [Members of Parliament] are to represent the people: ye are not to personate them.³

A popular judge is a deformed thing: and *Plaudite's* are fitter for players than for magistrates.⁴

When we read Shakespeare's plays, we know that their author must have been an actor, for his metaphors and comparisons reflect the

¹ R. W. Church, *Life of Bacon*, p. 21.

² Bacon's *Essays*, ed. M. A. Scott, New York, 1908, p. lxxxii.

³ Spedding, *Letters*, VII, 178.

⁴ Spedding, *Letters*, VI, 211.

stage and its people. So with Bacon, his quotations and analogies show the image of his reading and his life as a parliamentarian. Such passages as the following are plentiful:

His Majesty hath shewed himself to be *lex loquens*, and to sit upon the throne, not as a dumb statue, but as a speaking oracle.¹

Bacon was a devoted reader of the classics, and if his speeches contain few marks of the drama being acted about him, they are saturated with the Greek and Latin writers, and there is scarcely a page which is not crowded with ample excerpts from the Scriptures, both from the Vulgate and the English Bible.² Probably these citations, as rhetorical authorities, would bring him more quickly on to common ground with his audience than similar passages from popular plays.³

Deep feeling and emotion scarcely ever, if at all, are to be found in Bacon's speeches. He gave intellect the first place. To quote his own words:

A man is but what he knoweth. Are not the pleasures of the affections greater than the pleasures of the senses? And are not the pleasures of the intellect greater than the pleasures of the affections?⁴

Aristotle characterizes old men by saying that they follow the advice of Bias, the last of the "Seven Wise Men," and love as though they would some day hate and hate as though they would some day love.⁵ One cannot help feeling that this cynical advice supplies the index to Bacon's actions when he occupied a seat in the House of Commons. It further explains the absence of any outbursts of rage or passages of human tenderness in his political speeches. If there was any love or hatred in his soul, he succeeded full well in hiding this trait of character. How very different from the passionate

¹ Spedding, *Letters*, VII, 176.

² Bacon may have used Biblical quotations in abundance owing to their familiarity. His audiences would have known the commonplace books (such as those of Peter the Martyr), and the paraphrase books, which had been common since the time of Henry VIII.

³ The Elizabethan drama may not have exerted any influence on Bacon's speeches, but it is conceivable that the movement was in the other direction. The writer is indebted to Professor H. J. C. Grierson of the University of Edinburgh for this observation. Professor Grierson thinks that Ben Jonson learned much from Bacon's speeches and may have modeled many of the speeches of Sejanus, in his tragedy, *The Fall of Sejanus*, produced at the Globe Theatre, 1603, after those of Francis Bacon, whom he greatly admired as an orator.

⁴ *Advancement of Learning*, bk. i, *Works*, VI, 167.

⁵ *Rhetoric*, II, 13.

utterances of Edmund Burke! The reader should not gain the impression that Bacon's speaking was dull, or solely matter-of-fact. On the contrary, there have been few English orators with a finer genius for presenting interesting ideas and clear thought on important political issues. He had the added gift of dressing his utterances in virile and figurative language. Yet there is always an academic calm, a peculiar restraint, which appears to act as a rein to hold in check any emotion. There is something of the human icicle about Bacon: his humanity is never absent, but it is glazed over with a frigid surface, which chills the expression of the speaker's deeper feelings. Greater warmth is to be found in some of his forensic speeches. In his Charge at the Trial of Lord Sanquhar¹ especially, Bacon displays unwonted passion.

There were other instances, in debates in the House, and arguments in the law courts, when Bacon became very much impassioned, if only for brief spaces, but these occasions were not frequent. An illustration is of interest. This is a passage from one of Bacon's speeches in the Parliamentary debates of 1601:

I speak out of the very strings of my heart; which doth alter my ordinary form of speech; for I speak not now out of the fervency of my brain.²

As Spedding observes, this unusual remark has a personal interest, as giving a glimpse of Bacon in a state of excitement, to which he did not often give way in public. Professor Grierson holds that Burke reasoned better when he was highly impassioned; the emotions of that orator seemed to govern his logic.³ Certainly, if this be true of Burke, it does not apply to Bacon. When Bacon became overwrought emotionally, his thought seemed to weaken; he indulged in raillery and sarcasm to the extent of being ridiculous. At least, this is the impression one gains from reading such few excerpts as have come to our notice.⁴

In writing of Bacon's apparent emotional reserve, one is reminded of another stylistic quality, which may arise therefrom. As in his *Essays*, the thought in Bacon's speeches is frequently so condensed that it leads to ambiguity. At times, one finds it difficult to catch the

¹ Spedding, *Letters*, IV, 291-3.

² Townshend's *Journal*, p. 291. In Spedding, *Letters*, III, 38.

³ *Cambridge History of English Literature*, XI, 35.

⁴ This may be the sort of thing Ben Jonson meant, when he said: "Bacon's language, when he could spare or pass by a jest. . . ."

speaker's meaning, for Bacon indulges very little in restatement, although clarity in oral style demands the repetition of the idea.¹ Another and related weakness in Bacon's oral style is his tendency to pack too much material into some of his paragraphs. What De Quincey criticized in Bacon's prose, may be set down here as equally applicable to certain sections of his political speeches:

Another unfavorable circumstance, arising in fact out of the plethoric fulness of Lord Bacon's mind, is the shorthand style of his composition, in which the connexions are seldom fully developed. It was the lively *mot* of a great modern poet, speaking of Lord Bacon's *Essays*, "that they are not plants, but seeds; not oaks, but acorns."²

It is not unusual to find men of Bacon's temperament devoting care to the structure and plan of their speeches. Bacon was no exception. Most of the speeches appear to fall into a fourfold division: introduction, narration, proof, and conclusion. Bacon, further, follows the rhetorical custom of outlining his chief points, before he proceeds to develop them:

Now, my Lords, I beseech you give me favor and attention to set forth and observe unto you five points. I will number them, because other men may note them; and I will but touch them, because they shall not be drowned or lost in discourse.³

And yet, to avoid confusion, which evermore followeth of [upon] too much generality, it is necessary for me (before I proceed to persuasion) to use some distribution of the points or parts of Naturalization, which certainly can be no better, nor none other, than the ancient distinction [distribution] of *Jus Civitatis*, *Jus Suffragii vel Tribus*, and *Jus Petitionis sive Honorum*. For all ability and capacity is either of private interest of *meum* and *tuum*, or of public service.⁴

And therefore the matter which I shall set forth unto you will naturally receive this distribution of three parts.⁵

These illustrations from Bacon's rhetorical practice will explain his custom of outlining his points in advance; they will further show

¹ Bacon's habit of compressing his thought to the point of ambiguity is shown in the Speech Concerning Deer-Stealing, Oct. 23, 1614, Spedding, *Letters*, V, 87-9. The connecting links are not clear; there is an overuse of the pronoun.

² *The Collected Writings of Thomas DeQuincey*, ed. Masson, Edinburgh, 1890, X, 109 n.

³ Spedding, *Letters*, V, 138.

⁴ Speech in the Lower House, on Scottish Naturalization, 1607, Spedding, *Letters*, III, 309.

⁵ *Ibid.*

that he believed in this rhetorical method. In addition to this quality in his speech structure, the reader of Bacon's speeches is immediately impressed with the directness of his introductions. He wastes no words in order to present his subject and to get on to common ground with his audience. Again, his conclusions are concise summaries of the points covered; there are no extended perorations.

IV

The mere reading of Bacon's speeches shows that they were pointed, unemotional, businesslike. We must turn to evidence outside the speeches themselves for some idea as to how Bacon impressed those who saw and heard him.

In his youth Bacon's appearance is said to have been singularly frank and engaging, but his features were much furrowed and darkened by the contests of political life, and the misfortunes of his later years. His severe habits of study early impressed upon him the marks of age, bent his shoulders, and gave him the stooping gait of a philosopher. His stature was of the middle size, with features rather oblong than round. His forehead was spacious and open, his eye lively and penetrating, and his whole aspect venerably pleasing; so that the beholder was insensibly drawn to love, before he knew how much reason there was to admire, him. In this respect we may apply to him what Tacitus says of Agricola, "Bonum virum facile crederes, magnum libenter."¹

This seems fairly to synthesize much that has been set down by writers with regard to Bacon's physical features. Perhaps the most striking characteristic of all is the acute magnetism of the eyes. It was Dr. Harvey who told John Aubrey: "Bacon had a delicate, lively hazel eie; it was like the eie of a viper."² When one surveys Peter Oliver's miniature, or the portrait from the brush of Paulus Van Somer, one feels that the artists must have experienced, and have sought to convey, the peculiar fascination of Bacon's eyes. It may not be an exaggeration to attribute much of Bacon's charm and attractiveness, in delivering his speeches, to this power of the eye to gain and hold the attention of his audience. For Ben Jonson affirmed,

¹ Joseph Davey, *The Moral and Historical Works of Lord Bacon*, London, 1894, p. xxix.

² John Aubrey, *Brief Lives*, ed. Andrew Clark, Oxford, 1898, I, 70-2. See Arthur Wilson's contemporary account of Bacon's person, reprinted in Kennet's *Complete History of England*, London, 1706, II, 736; David Lloyd, *State Worthies*, ed. Charles Whitworth, London, 1766, II, 121: "Bacon's make and port was stately."

"He commanded where he spoke." But the speeches themselves indicate that Bacon made a conscious effort to keep in touch with his hearers. In the political speeches, he frequently interjects such phrases as: "Mr. Speaker," "It is a truth, Mr. Speaker," "Note, Mr. Speaker." He is ever alert to the presence of his hearers.

To indicate the reception of Bacon's speeches by his audiences, we have the criticisms of his contemporaries. It is evident that Bacon's first two or three speeches in the House of Commons were received with that incredulous disdain with which the English public greets every beginner who dares to display his views before an audience, or to proclaim his cause in the open. Recorder Fleetwood noted these speeches, and apparently was not very favorably disposed towards the new member of the House. Mr. Spedding has reprinted Fleetwood's caustic comments on the speeches,¹ and one concludes that Bacon's first speeches were by no means triumphs. The situation quickly changed, and Bacon became one of the most popular talkers in the Lower House.

We find that Sir Henry Wotton, in his commonplace book, *Table Talk*, refers to Bacon as "a very fair speaker."² Three other opinions, by as many different writers, are of interest:

My Lord Chancellor Bacon is lately dead of a long languishing weakness; he died so poor that he scarce left money to bury him. . . . I have read, that it had been the fortunes of all Poets commonly to die beggars; but for an Orator, a Lawyer, and Philosopher, as he was, to die so, 'tis rare. . . . A rare man; a man *Reconditæ scientiæ, et ad salutem literarum natus*, and I think the eloquentest that was born in this Isle.³

Bacon was a creature of incomparable abilities of mind, of a sharp and catching apprehension, large and faithful memory, plentiful and sprouting invention, deep and solid judgment, for as much as might concern the understanding part. A man so rare in knowledge, of so many severall kinds, endued with the facility and felicity of expressing it all, in so elegant, significant, so abundant, and yet so choice and ravishing a way of words, of metaphors, and allusions, as perhaps the world hath not seen, since it was a world.⁴

¹ Spedding, *Letters*, I, 42 ff.

² Logan Pearsall Smith, *Life and Letters of Sir Henry Wotton*, Oxford, 1907, II, 497.

³ *Epistolæ Ho-Eliañæ, The Familiar Letters of James Howell*, ed. Joseph Jacobs, London, 1890, bk. i, sect. 4, Letter VIII to Dr. Prichard, dated 6 Jan. 1626 (our dating), pp. 218-19.

⁴ Sir Tobie Matthew, in his Preface to the *Collection of Letters*, edited by Dr. John Donne (son of the Dean), and published in 1660; the quotation is found in A. H. Matthew and A. Calthrop, *Life of Sir Tobie Matthew*, London, 1907, pp. 358-9.

Bacon was so excellent, so agreeable a speaker, that all who heard him were uneasy if he was interrupted, and sorry when he concluded. . . . Now this general knowledge he had in all things husbanded by his wit, and dignified by so majestic a carriage, he was known to own, struck such an awful reverence in those he questioned, that they durst not conceal the most intrinsic part of their mysteries from him, for fear of appearing ignorant or saucy: all of which rendered him no less necessary than admirable at the Council-table.¹

These excerpts deal with Bacon's eloquence, and with him as a public figure. We may add a friend's tender word of affection:

My conceit of Bacon's person was never increased toward him by his place or honors. But I have and do reverence him for the greatness that was only proper to himself, in that he seemed to me ever, by his work, one of the greatest men, and most worthy of admiration, that had been in many ages. In his adversity I ever prayed that God would give him strength; for greatness he could not want. Neither could I condole in a word or syllable for him, as knowing no accident could do harm to virtue, but rather help to make it manifest.²

Here are some of the tributes that have been paid to Bacon's power as a speaker, a political adviser, and, above all, as a mighty personality. These are the opinions of the men who knew him as an individual; who heard him move and command his audiences; who saw him in action in the arena of national politics. What deductions are we justified in making?

He must have been popular and persuasive as a speaker: at least, he interested his hearers; they were glad to have his advice on the questions of the hour. His speeches were always listened to with respect, consequently he must have done the government a great deal of excellent service. In the House of Commons, he had a personality that demanded respect and attention. In no single instance which the writer has been able to discover, did the Lower House exhibit any apparent displeasure with Bacon's decisions or public speeches. So much confidence had they in his fair-mindedness and good judgment, so persuasive was he in his manner of speech, that, time after time, he was placed as chairman of committees authorized to carry out objects that he had definitely opposed during the debates. More than once he was appointed to search for precedents, argue before

¹ Francis Osborn in his *Miscellaneous Works*, found in *The Library of Literary Criticism*, ed. C. W. Moulton, I, 640. Note also Francis Osborn, *Traditional Memoirs of the Reigns of Elizabeth and James the First*, *passim*.

² Ben Jonson, *Timber or Discoveries*, ed. Schelling, p. 31.

the Lords, or address the Sovereign, in favor of ideas that ran somewhat counter to his own. He had never made a cause of the government unpopular by his way of handling it, and from the praise bestowed upon him by his contemporaries, one is inclined to believe that as a man in politics, and as a political orator, Bacon shared a degree of admiration from his colleagues, which it has been the lot of very few public men to enjoy.¹

Bacon must have spoken with dignity and composure, with a sort of reverend seriousness, for Jonson says: "He was full of gravity in his speaking. . . . No member of his speech but consisted of his own graces." In brief, the various divisions of his subject must have been presented with a degree of charm, an ease and refinement of expression. He seldom uttered an intemperate word when addressing the Commons: "No man ever spake more neatly, more presly, more weightily, or suffered less emptiness, less idleness, in what he uttered." His remarks were free of triviality, of any ineptitude; his points were covered with brevity, concisely, with exactness and precision. "His language . . . was nobly censorious," which, in the Elizabethan sense, meant grave and severe, befitting a censor. And again, "He commanded where he spoke, and had his judges angry or pleased at his devotion," which shows that his hearers were impressed with Bacon's enthusiasm and earnestness for his topic while speaking. It is clear, too, that he held the good will of his audience, for he had their affections "in his power"; and, as the *New English Dictionary* points out, in this passage the word "affections" does not have the somewhat cheap connotation which was usual in Elizabethan times.

Ben Jonson is less complimentary when he writes, "His language, where he could spare or pass by a jest. . . ." In his essay, "Of Discourse," Bacon uses "jest" in the sense of ridicule, laughter, and goes on to state: "Some things are privileged from jest, namely Religion, matters of State, great persons . . . and any cause that deserveth pittie." Are we to conclude, therefore, that Bacon violated one of his own rhetorical tenets? Did he actually indulge in raillery and witticisms at the expense of others? Were taunts and jeers part of his stock in trade? Abbott offers this commentary:

¹ In asking the reader to accept these conclusions, one would make reference to Spedding, *Letters*, VII, 571; S. R. Gardiner, *History of England, 1603-1616*, I, 181-3; Edward Foss, *The Judges of England*, London, 1848-64, VI, 79.

Jonson hints at one of Bacon's defects. Compare what the faithful Yelverton reports to Bacon himself: "It is too common in every man's mouth in Court that your greatness shall be abated; and, *as your tongue hath been a razor to some, so shall theirs be to you.*"¹

There is little in the political speeches which have come down to us to warrant such prominence for this criticism. Some of the legal arguments contain more in the manner of caustic attack and sarcastic raillery. All the evidence leads one to believe that Bacon's attitude towards his adversaries, in the debates in the House of Commons, may have been at times a bit vitriolic, although none of these speeches has been preserved for our examination in Spedding's collection. After considering other contemporary opinions, and after an intensive examination of the speeches, one is convinced that Ben Jonson's description of Bacon's speaking, both in content and in delivery, was an excellently clear and fair estimate.²

V

When a man of genius is accorded unstinted praise for his accomplishments, the public is inclined to take for granted that his achievements have come to him with the minimum of effort on his own part. Perhaps this is truer in the case of the orator than in that of most other persons. Frequently, the effectiveness of his speech is judged on the basis of what he actually does at the moment of its delivery, and the greater his facility of expression, the more we are apt to say: "How charming! How delightful! He's a born orator!" So, when we read that Bacon's colleagues commended his ease of manner, his quiet dignity of delivery, his poise and composure before his audiences in the Houses of Parliament and in the law courts, we are quite ready to jump at conclusions, to assume that he was endowed

¹ E. A. Abbott, *Francis Bacon*, p. 452 n.

² The writer is inclined to agree with De Quincey's observation on this part of Ben Jonson's encomium: "Bacon attained the chief object of all oratory, if what Ben Jonson reports of him be true. But Jonson was, perhaps, too scholastic a judge to be a fair representative judge; and, whatever he might choose to say or to think, Lord Bacon was certainly too weighty—too massy with the bullion of original thought—ever to have realized the idea of a great popular orator, one who 'Wielded at will a fierce democratic.'" (*The Collected Writings of Thomas DeQuincey*, X, 336.) For further commentaries on Ben Jonson's estimate of Bacon's speaking consult: Arthur James (Earl) Balfour, *Essays Speculative and Political*, New York, 1921, p. 149; A. C. Swinburne, *A Study of Ben Jonson*, London, 1889, p. 148; T. B. Macaulay, *Critical and Historical Essays*, ed. Montague, II, 140.

by nature with these rare qualities of oral expression. On the contrary, Bacon was by nature temperamental, possessed of an exceedingly nervous and sensitive disposition. He unquestionably attained facility and ease in delivery only after a rigid self-training in speech. Those writers who have investigated this phase of the subject at all, agree unanimously that Bacon underwent a rigorous form of preparation and personal discipline in order to talk effectively in public.¹

Many of Bacon's writings on the subject of rhetoric and public speaking took the form of advice to himself on the matter of speech preparation and delivery. Here are a few examples:

To suppress at once my speaking with panting and labor of breath and voyce. Not to fall upon the mayne to soudayne but to induce and intermingle speach of good fashion.

To use at once upon entrance gyven of speach though abrupt to compose and draw in myself. To free myself at once from payment of formality and complement though with some shew of carelessness pride and rudeness.²

Bashfulness is a great hindrance to a man, both of uttering his conceit, and understanding what is propounded unto him; wherefore it is good to press himself forwards with discretion, both in speech and company of the better sort.

It is necessary to use a steadfast countenance, not wavering with action, as in moving the head or hand too much, which sheweth a fantastical, light, and fickle operation of the spirit, and consequently like mind as gesture: only it is sufficient, with leisure, to use a modest action in either.

In all kinds of speech, either pleasant, grave, severe, or ordinary, it is convenient to speak leisurely, and rather drawingly, than hastily; because hasty speech confounds the memory, and oftentimes, besides unseemliness, drives a man either to a nonplus or unseemly stammering, harping upon that which should follow; whereas a slow speech confirmeth the memory, addeth a conceit of wisdom to the hearers, besides a seemliness of speech and countenance.³

¹J. M. Robertson, *Contemporary Review*, CII (1912), 347. See also H. J. C. Grierson, *The First Half of the Seventeenth Century*, p. 205: "Francis Bacon was as careful a student of the art of clear, dignified, and persuasive utterance as of any other of the many fields of inquiry his restless mind surveyed. *The Colors of Good and Evil* (1597)—which, with the first draft of the *Essays*, was his earliest literary publication—and the *Promus of Formularies and Elegancies*, show, what is equally clear from everything he wrote, how consciously he studied to speak and write effectively."

²This, and the preceding quotation, occur in the essay, "Fit Habits for the Individual," in Spedding, *Letters*, IV, 93 ff.

³This, with the two preceding passages, is taken from the essay, "Short Notes for Civil Conversation," *Works*, XIII, 309 ff.

These passages indicate with what effort Bacon must have conquered his natural reticence and inhibitions that he might speak with composure and power. He was a great orator; his hearers placed him above the famous speakers of his own time: Sidney, Coke, Salisbury, and the others; but even to the close of his political career, Bacon had to fight in order to overcome some of his mannerisms of speech. It was William Drummond of Hawthornden, who recorded: "My Lord Chancellor of England wringeth his speeches from the strings of his band."¹ Bacon admired a quiet and dignified manner of speaking, both for himself and for others. We find him, as Lord Keeper, in the Court of Common Pleas, advocating: "That your speech be with gravity, as one of the sages of the Law; and not talkative, nor with impertinent flying out to shew learning."²

What course did Bacon adopt in the preparation of his speeches? Little is certainly known of his methods. There is no evidence that he spoke from memory. Indeed, the fact that no copies of the earlier speeches survive, and that the later copies were written out after the speeches had been made, suggests that Bacon's practice was always to speak from notes. The earliest speech that has come down to us in full is one on a Motion of Subsidy made in 1597.³ Of this Spedding says :

Whether this and other speeches similarly preserved were taken from the draft prepared beforehand of what Bacon intended to say, or from recollection set down afterwards of what he had said, we have I believe no means of knowing. In his later life it is known that he seldom did more than set down a few notes, from which he spoke extempore. And the fact that of the many speeches in Parliament which he made during Elizabeth's reign, many of them on subjects equally important, this is the only one of which he left a copy, makes me think that at this time he rarely prepared them in writing, and had not yet begun to take the trouble of setting them down from memory; but that this, being a kind of opening speech, and the occasion being important and delicate, he had written out at large, though he probably varied it in delivery.⁴

It is possible, of course, that Bacon's earlier practice was to write out a draft as a means of arranging his thoughts even if

¹ William Drummond of Hawthornden, *Conversations with Ben Jonson*, ed. Philip Sidney, London, 1906 (Number XIV), p. 39.

² Speech to Justice Hutton, when he was called to be one of the Judges of the Common Pleas, May 19, 1617, Spedding, *Letters*, VI, 202 ff.

³ Spedding, *Letters*, II, 85-9.

⁴ Spedding, *Letters*, II, 84.

not as a means of storing his memory. It is certain that in later life he spoke regularly from notes and an outline, though he often had occasion to dictate a speech (after its public delivery) to his secretary, Bushell.¹ This method was especially used in giving his speeches in court, and in presenting his legal arguments in general. Even his great forensic oration at the trial of Somerset was not completely written out, but spoken from notes—full, it is true—and written later.²

In disposing of this phase of the subject, one cannot do better than afford the reader the benefit of Bacon's own words:

I meant well also; and because my information was the ground, having spoken out of a few heads which I had gathered (for I seldom do more), I set down as soon as I came home cursorily a frame of that I said; though I persuade myself I spake it with more life.³

It is outside the scope of this essay to examine in full detail the sources of Bacon's rhetorical theory, or to give a complete account of his writings on rhetoric by citing further examples from his theory and practice. Sufficient illustrations have been introduced to show that Bacon formulated a definite theory of persuasion; this theory grew out of his own personal need for self-discipline and training in the art of speech making. He set down his theory in a number of special pamphlets and letters. Chief among these is *The Colors of Good and Evil*, which is described by their author as "a table of colors or appearances of good and evil, and their degrees, as places of persuasion and dissuasion, etc."⁴ Added to this, the following works contain much of his rhetorical theory: *Formularies and Elegancies*, "Short Notes for Civil Conversation," "Discourse touching Helps for the Intellectual Powers,"⁵ the memoranda entitled "Fit Habits for the Individual,"⁶ and, among the *Essays*,

¹ John Aubrey, *Brief Lives*, I, 83.

² Spedding, *Letters*, V, 307.

³ Bacon's *Letter to the King*, reporting the day of hearing of Oliver St. John's Cause in the Star Chamber, April 29, 1615, Spedding, *Letters*, V, 135.

⁴ *Works*, XIII, 270. Here is a comment on this essay: "Here again appears Aristotle, the model and source of the Baconian theory. In fact those things which Bacon called 'popular signs of good and evil' . . . are nothing else than those topics called in Greek εἶδη, which refer to the deliberative genus, and which Aristotle noted and classified in the first book of his *Rhetoric*." P. Jacquinet, *Francisci Baconi De Re Litteraria Judicia*, Paris, 1863, p. 56.

⁵ These works are found, in order, in *Works*, XIV, 11 ff., XIII, 309 ff., 297 ff.

⁶ Spedding, *Letters*, IV, 93 ff.

especially "Of Discourse," "Of Negotiations," and "Of Counsel."* Scattered throughout the *Advancement of Learning*, the *De Augmentis*, and the *Apothegms New and Old*, there is much to be found on the subject of the written and the spoken word.

What shall one write of the sources of Bacon's rhetorical theory? One cannot afford to be too dogmatic or arbitrary. He unquestionably knew and studied Thomas Wilson's *Arte of Rhetorique*, and Roger Ascham's *Scholemaster*; and as these scholars were saturated with Cicero and Quintilian, their rhetorics owe their base and substance to the Latin teachers.¹ Of course, Bacon's knowledge of the classics was not obtained from secondary sources; he possessed a first-hand acquaintance with the works of the ancient rhetoricians. There are many references to Tacitus in the works of Bacon, and it is highly likely that he learned much from the latter's *Dialogue on Oratory*. Seneca, too, is mentioned with favor:

Seneca giveth an excellent check to eloquence, *Nocet illis eloquentia, quibus non rerum cupiditatem facit, sed sui*: (eloquence does mischief when it draws men's attention away from the matter to fix it on itself).²

Although the influence of Cicero on Bacon has been exaggerated by those who forget the wide difference in mind and temper between the two, there is no doubt that Bacon acquired part of his rhetorical theory from the *De Oratore*. But it is probable that Bacon's theory and practice of the art of persuasion owed more to Aristotle than critics are generally inclined to concede. There are constant references to the Greek scholar in all of Bacon's writings; and it was with Aristotle's science, not with his *Rhetoric*, that Bacon had his quarrel. But for evidence as to the sources of Bacon's rhetorical theory, we need not delay over the critics; it is better to go to the fountainhead; let the reader ponder Bacon's own acknowledgement:

And yet perchance some that shall compare my lines with Aristotle's lines, will muse by what art, or rather by what revelation, I could draw these conceits out of that place. But I, that should know best, do freely acknowledge that I had my light from him; for where he gave me not matter to perfect, at the least he gave me the occasion to invent.³

¹ *Wilson's Arte of Rhetorique* 1560, ed. G. H. Mair, pp. xix-xx.

² *Advancement of Learning*, bk. ii, *Works*, VI, 310.

³ Preface to the *Colors of Good and Evil*, *Works*, XIII, 263. See also *Advancement of Learning*, bk. ii, *Works*, VI, 269; 297; 300.

For his rhetorical theory, Bacon received much of his inspiration from Aristotle, but he added to the work of his master. Bacon made little pretense to conceal the authority upon which he had worked out his own theory of eloquence. In the *Colors of Good and Evil*, for example, he desired most earnestly that the work which Aristotle had begun so well, but had left another to finish, should be taken up again as a whole, and that it should be carried on to a successful completion by the careful labor of some wise and competent man. He himself, in the work named, undertook such a labor, to the extent of compiling a partial table of topical proofs (or better, perhaps, lines of argument), worked out more systematically than the similar schemes in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. In the case of the probable proofs which Bacon advances, he brings each one to the test and shows its fallacies, a thing which Aristotle did in very few cases. The idea which Bacon had in mind when attempting to compile his *Colors of Good and Evil* may be inferred from the following passage found in the *De Augmentis*:

The second Collection, which belongs to the Promptuary or Preparatory Store, is that to which Cicero alludes . . . where he recommends the orator to have commonplaces ready at hand, in which the question is argued and handled on either side. . . . But I extend this precept to other cases; applying it not only to the judicial kind of oratory, but also to the deliberative and demonstrative. *I would have in short all topics which there is frequent occasion to handle (whether they relate to proofs and refutations, or to persuasions and dissuasions, or to praise and blame) studied and prepared beforehand;* and not only so, but the case exaggerated both ways with the utmost force of the wit, and urged unfairly, as it were, and quite beyond the truth. And the best way of making such a collection, with a view to use as well as brevity, would be to contract those commonplaces into certain acute and concise sentences; to be as skeins or bottoms of thread which may be unwinded at large when they are wanted.¹

VI

What shall one set down in conclusion? If the essayist has had one aim more than another it is a desire that, in future, the reader will think of Lord Bacon, not only as the author of the *Advancement of Learning*, and the *English Essays*, but as one of the really great political speakers who have graced the English Parliament. He was not only a philosopher, a scientist, and

¹ *Works*, IX, 155. Italics mine.

a man of letters. He was a public man, with statecraft half his stock in trade, rhetoric the other. Examining his speeches, it is evident that he had a well-defined theory of government which he was not ashamed to express. He lived in strenuous times, when the new balance of power between King and Parliament was being brought about. To the solution of this problem, as of lesser governmental problems of his time, he brought not only an acute and well-trained mind, but a definite philosophy, a consistent outlook on human life. He has been called a utilitarian; that only means that his deepest interests were centered on the workings and welfare of human society—on the relief of man's estate. In the consummation of his purposes as a statesman, his abilities as an orator played a leading part, were indeed the principal instrument. He could not have contributed to the cause of better government, had he not been a powerful speaker. His speeches form the seed-plot of parliamentary oratory in the English language; they rank with those of Eliot, Chatham, and Burke. Bacon was a successful orator both in the House of Commons and in the law courts. He pleased his hearers, and drew enormous audiences to hear him. We know that he attracted the members of Parliament; we know that crowds flocked to listen to his Legal Charges. Read his own words:

Of myself I will not nor cannot say anything, but that my voice served me well for two hours and a half; and that those that understood nothing could tell me that I lost not one auditor that was present in the beginning, but staid till the later end. If I should say more, there were too many witnesses (for I never saw the Court more full) that might disprove me. My Lord Cook [Edward Coke] was pleased to say that it was a famous argument.¹

Bacon's speeches at the trial of the Earl and Countess of Somerset, in May, 1616, are comparable with those famous orations delivered by Edmund Burke and Sheridan at the impeachment of Warren Hastings. Even as Burke and Sheridan, Bacon addressed enormous audiences in Westminster Hall. We are told that the Countess of Somerset was brought to answer the charge before a crowded and eager audience. Places to hear, says Chamberlain, a contemporary, "were grown to so extraordinary a rate that four or five pieces (as

¹ On the 25th January, 1615, Bacon made a great speech on the question of the *Rege Inconsulto*. In his Letter to the King, touching this matter, the above words occur. See Spedding, *Letters*, V, 235.

they call them) was an ordinary price; and I know a lawyer that had agreed to give ten pounds for himself and his wife for the two days; and fifty pounds were given for a corner that could hardly contain a dozen."¹ The throng was as great and the audience as distinguished on the second day of the proceedings: "More ladies and great personages," says Chamberlain, "than ever I think were seen at a trial."² Of course, one must admit that the personages of the trial were prominent socially; the case had a great deal of interest in itself. Still, the speeches which Bacon delivered on these occasions attracted the assembly, and remain among the famous legal arguments of England.

If the instrument of Bacon's statesmanship was his oratory, the instrument of his oratory was his carefully formulated rhetorical theory. He was a conscious artist, a student of the classical theories of rhetoric, and a theorist on his own account. But his theory was constructed, essentially, to meet his own needs as a speaker. With Bacon, theory and practice were never completely dissociated. It is the intimate connection of theory and practice which makes the study of his works interesting,³ and which accounts in large part, we believe, for his great success as a speaker.

In the *De Oratore*, Cicero portrays the orator as a man who loved art and literature; one who understood and enjoyed life and the world about him; one who knew a variety of subjects—statecraft, science, and philosophy; in short, the orator was a man of action who reflected the spirit of his age. And here, we find Lord Bacon an orator in the Ciceronian sense. Even Macaulay grants him this: "Scarcely any man has led a more stirring life than that which Bacon led from sixteen to sixty. Scarcely any man has been better entitled to be called a thorough man of the world."⁴

¹ Spedding, *Letters*, V, 297.

² Spedding, *Letters*, V, 306.

³ Perhaps there is no place where Bacon has so effectively applied his theory of Rhetoric as he has done in the First Book of the *Advancement of Learning*. This First Book is a rhetorical study. Here Bacon appears to have used all of the popular views for a persuasive discourse in favor of learning. It is a plea for what follows in Book II.

⁴ *Critical and Historical Essays*, ed. Montague, II, 238.

DE QUINCEY ON RHETORIC AND PUBLIC SPEAKING

HOYT H. HUDSON

WHEN the schoolmaster at Bath said of thirteen-year-old Thomas De Quincey, "That boy could harangue an Athenian mob better than you or I could address an English one," he singled out one of the interests which De Quincey maintained throughout his long life of study—an interest in public speaking and rhetoric, rooted in a knowledge of the Greek masters. True, he never himself faced the perils or sought the prizes of public address; and in scattered passages he attacks, or at least discounts, wielders of rhetoric. Those familiar with the criticism of oratory need not be told that it is contemporary orators he discounts, in favor of the "giants" of a generation or two previous, and that he uses a skilful rhetoric to make his attack upon the art.

One or two of De Quincey's reminiscent anecdotes relate to quelled orators. "Ah! what a beautiful idea occurs to me at this point," he exclaims on one page of his burlesque novel, *The Spanish Military Nun*. "Once, on a hustings at Liverpool, I saw a mob orator, whose brawling mouth, open to its widest expansion, suddenly some larking sailor, by the most dexterous of shots, plugged up with a paving-stone." At this point the veil is drawn.

More revealing, perhaps, is an incident of his childhood. Thomas's elder brother had taken it upon himself to give lectures in physics to the other children of the family and their playmates. His "habit of lowering the pitch of his lectures with ostentatious condescension to the presumed level" of his hearers' understandings, however, so irked his sister Mary that she planned an insurrection. When the speaker came to say, as was his custom, that he flattered himself he had made the point under discussion tolerably clear, gratuitously adding "to the meanest of capacities," and then, in an exuberance of verbosity, capping all with the phrase, "clear to the most excruciatingly mean of capacities," there was a feminine voice raised protesting, "No, you haven't; it's as dark as sin." This was

followed by a second voice—Thomas's we may presume—saying, "Dark as night," and still another with, "Dark as midnight,"—"and so the peal," writes De Quincey, "continued to come round like a catch, the whole being so well concerted, and the rolling fire so well maintained, that it was impossible to make head against it." The disconcerted lecturer finally fell back upon a phrase of Burke's, then current, and addressed his audience as a "swinish multitude," adding something about pearls.

Alert observation, multifarious knowledge, and critical acumen, together with the lively interest already noticed, served to make De Quincey a keen student of the oratory of all ages, including his own. He was one of those who rediscovered, as someone in each generation must, it appears, rediscover, that literary prose had its origins in public speaking; that the persuasive impulse—that is, an impulse not only to communicate but also to attract and influence a more or less clearly defined audience—underlies stylistic devices and effects; and that by taking into account the factors of changing methods of publication, changing politics, and changing standards of taste, the story of literary prose can be written in terms of speaker and audience.

Such are the important and inescapable conclusions left in one's mind after reading De Quincey's "Elements of Rhetoric,"¹ an excursive review suggested by Whately's book of that title, together with his essay entitled "Style," and the section on orators in his "Brief Appraisal of the Greek Literature in its Foremost Pretensions,"² Yet when one attempts to go further and to ascertain De Quincey's concepts of rhetoric, eloquence, and style, and the interrelation of these, one is baffled by the author's continual discursiveness and occasional inconsistency. Such an ambitious attempt was originally the purpose of this study. Let it now be stated that the writer has rather chosen from the teeming mass of De Quincey's

¹ Appearing originally in *Blackwood's Magazine* for December, 1828, and reprinted in the Collective edition (1859) under the title "Rhetoric." I have used Masson's edition, *The Collected Writings of Thomas De Quincey* (London, 1897), wherein the essays on literary theory and criticism are collected in Volumes X and XI; and Professor Fred Newton Scott's edition, *De Quincey's Essays on Style, Rhetoric, and Language* (Boston, 1893).

² "Style" appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine* in four parts, 1840-41; the study of Greek literature in *Tait's Magazine*, December, 1838, and June, 1839. Nor should one overlook the essay, "Conversation," published in *Tait's Magazine*, October, 1847, and enlarged for the Collective edition. All are to be found in Masson, X.

ideas a few which appear specially significant, considered in relation to rhetorical tradition and recent stylistic theory and practice; and illustrations from our author's own practice of the salient points of his theory. After these major considerations were decided upon, a number of additional observations and suggestions from De Quincey's overflowing bounty were found to be too valuable or too interesting to omit.

I

What, for example, are we to make of such a statement as this, set down early and prominently in De Quincey's essay on rhetoric: "And, in fact, amongst the greater orators of Greece there is not a solitary gleam of rhetoric"?¹ It follows upon an accurate and important distinction between rhetoric as an *ars docens*, or theoretical study, and as an *ars utens*, or practical accomplishment; with the admission that "the theory, or *ars docens*, was taught with a fulness and an accuracy by the Grecian masters not afterwards approached."² The statement cited, then, has to do with rhetoric in practice. But why such a gap between theory and practice? The Greeks were the greatest of all teachers of rhetoric, the science; but in their best rhetorical discourse there is to be found no application of the principles of this science. Such is De Quincey's argument. Rhetoric, says Aristotle, is "the faculty of finding, in any subject, all the available means of persuasion." Granting that such is the *ars docens*, one must say that rhetorical discourse, the *ars utens*, consists in the employment of all available means of persuasion in speech. Yet, says De Quincey, "there is not a solitary gleam of rhetoric" in the orations of Demosthenes or Lysias or Æschines, though a little of it may be found in the unspoken ones composed by Isocrates.

The truth is that De Quincey, heeding his private genius, is for the moment disregarding every previous concept of rhetorical discourse in favor of one which apparently has just swum into his

¹ Masson, X, 94.

² Masson, X, 93. De Quincey goes on: "In particular, it was so taught by Aristotle; whose system we are disposed to agree with Dr. Whately in pronouncing the best as regards the primary purpose of a teacher; though otherwise, for elegance and as a practical model in the art he was expounding, neither Aristotle, nor any less austere among the Greek rhetoricians, has any pretensions to measure himself with Quintilian."

consciousness, with all the dazzle of novelty playing about it. To be sure, he had made a show, at the beginning of his essay, of disposing of previous explanations of rhetoric. But so ill-considered is his treatment of them that Professor Masson finds it necessary to write a fifteen-hundred-word note designed to set the reader right, a note beginning with the suggestion that De Quincey suffers from "an imperfect recollection of the contents and substance of Aristotle's *Treatise on Rhetoric*."¹ But De Quincey is in a hurry to set down his own delightful ideas—his bombshell theory concerning rhetorical enthymemes and his touchstones of rhetorical discourse—so that he has not time enough to be wholly fair to his predecessors. And what is his own conception of rhetoric? Here is something like a definition (p. 92²):

But Rhetoric is the art of aggrandizing and bringing out into strong relief, by means of various and striking thoughts, some aspect of truth which is of itself supported by no spontaneous feelings and therefore rests upon artificial aids.

This alone does not appear to be strikingly different from the Aristotelian conception, and certainly does not justify the statement concerning Greek orators with which we began. It is from various comments, and from his illustrative material, that we learn what De Quincey is driving at. We find, for instance (p. 93), that rhetoric "aims at an elaborate form of beauty which shrinks from the strife of business, and could neither arise nor make itself felt in a tumultuous assembly." Again it appears that the essence of rhetoric is (p. 97) "to hang upon one's own thoughts as an object of conscious interest, to play with them, to watch and pursue them through a maze of inversions, evolutions, and harlequin changes." The modern French writers are found to be "never rhetorical" because in their work (p. 121) "there is no eddying about their own thoughts; no motion of fancy self-sustained from its own activities; no flux and reflux of thought, half-meditative, half-capricious." From these passages a fairly consistent definition emerges, a definition worded by the indispensable Masson (p. 92n.) as "the art of intellectual and fantastic play with any subject to its utmost capabilities, or the

¹ Masson, X, 82-5. This note contains a clear and authoritative summary of the classical concept of rhetoric and of the various permutations of that concept which have prevailed in various periods.

² Page references in the text are to Masson, X.

art of enriching any main truth or idea by inweaving with it the largest possible amount of subsidiary and illustrative thought and fancy."

Now if we allow ourselves to dwell upon the elements of "play" and "fancy" in this conception, and to draw from these the suggestion of a love for ornament, we are likely to conclude that, in classical terms, De Quincey limits rhetoric to the epideictic, or demonstrative, branch, and this only in its decadent phases. He favors the Asiatic against the Attic. He makes it a game rather than a business. It belongs, as he says more than once, to ages of leisure rather than to those of stress and turmoil. It is the maneuvering of troops for display, in the gold braid of dress uniforms, rather than their mobilization for warfare or their deploying for battle. And to say that there is not a solitary gleam of rhetoric in the best Greek orators is somewhat like saying that there was not a solitary gleam of soccer football in the battle of the Marne.

One must be aware that De Quincey's taste favored this playing with ideas, this "eddyding about one's own thoughts," and with the sure instincts of a gourmet he went through the literatures of the world, smacking his lips over the choicest morsels. He would himself have admitted that his taste in this was a cultivated, a highly civilized, taste; perhaps an exotic taste. But it is a legitimate one, and it is not strange that he hastened to exhibit it, just as one who possesses a discriminating taste for artichokes or even an undiscriminating taste for daily cold baths rarely attempts to conceal the possession. De Quincey's defense is sound (p. 101): "The artifice and machinery of rhetoric furnishes in its degree as legitimate a basis for intellectual pleasure as any other; that the pleasure is of an inferior order, can no more attain the idea or model of the composition than it can impeach the excellence of an epigram that it is not a tragedy."

But to leave De Quincey here, thinking of rhetoric as a game, its end-product the "intellectual pleasure" of a few connoisseurs, and pointing to Ovid, Petronius Arbiter, the Senecas, Sir Thomas Browne, and Jeremy Taylor as its greatest players, would be to do him injustice and to miss the best part of his contribution upon the subject. We can appeal from De Quincey drunk with the heady rhythms of *rhetoriqueurs* to De Quincey the sober critic and craftsman; from the De Quincey who says (p. 94), "All great rhetori-



cians in selecting their subject have shunned the determinate causes of real life,"¹ to the De Quincey who honors Edmund Burke as supreme—if not supreme as a "pure rhetorician," then as something unnamed (an impure rhetorician, perhaps), but of a higher order. The soldier who plays at sham battles and who parades in review may also fight, even without changing his uniform; and though there may not have been any soccer at the battle of the Marne, we have it upon good authority that there were some gleams of cricket at Waterloo.

What is needed to convert rhetorical play into earnest is a persuasive purpose. Given this, De Quincey's art of play becomes Aristotle's art of war. It is a matter of taking the buttons off the rapiers. True, the presence of the persuasive impulse will tend to rein a bit the rhetorician's fancy; he will not eddy about his thoughts so freely, he will be less capricious; he will not, to refer to Masson's interpretation of De Quincey, necessarily inweave with his idea "the *largest possible amount* of subsidiary and illustrative thought and fancy," but rather such amount as serves his purpose and suits his audience. Yet the general tactics remain the same. And upon these tactics, which we know as rhetorical invention and rhetorical style, De Quincey is sound and helpful. "Like boys who are throwing the sun's rays into the eyes of a mob by means of a mirror," he writes in "Style," "you must shift your lights and

¹ On this point we take De Quincey *in flagrante delicto*, as witness the following passages:

"Rhetoric, in its finest and most absolute burnish, may be called an *eloquentia umbratica*; that is, it aims at an elaborate form of beauty which shrinks from the strife of business, and could neither arise nor make itself felt in a tumultuous assembly."

"My reason, however, for noticing this peculiarity [rhythm] in Isocrates is by way of fixing the attention upon the superiority, even for artificial ornaments, of downright practical business and the realities of political strife over the torpid atmosphere of a study or a school. Cicero, long after, had the same passion for *numerositas*, and the full, pompous rotundity of cadence. But in Cicero all habits and all faculties were nursed by the daily practice of life and its impassioned realities in the forum or in the senate. What is the consequence? Why this—that, whereas in the most laboured performance of Isocrates . . . few modern ears are sensible of any striking art, or any great result of harmony, in Cicero, on the other hand, the fine, sonorous modulations of his periodic style are delightful to the dullest ear of any European. Such are the advantages from real campaigns, from unsimulated strife of actual stormy life, over the torpid dreams of what the Romans called an *umbratic* experience."

The first is from "Rhetoric," written in 1828; the second from "A Brief Appraisal of the Greek Literature," written ten years later. (Masson, X, 93, 324.)

vibrate your reflections at every possible angle, if you would agitate the popular mind extensively." Here are the "inversions, evolutions, and harlequin changes," beloved by the rhetorician, carried on not for their own sake, but for the sake of producing a certain desired result in the minds of hearers. Still more explicit is this passage (p. 140):

Time must be given for the intellect to eddy about a truth, and to appropriate its bearings. There is a sort of previous lubrication, such as the boa-constrictor applies to any subject of digestion, which is requisite to familiarize the mind with a startling or a complex novelty. And this is obtained for the intellect by varying the modes of presenting it—now putting it directly before the eye, now obliquely, now in an abstract shape, now in the concrete; all which, being the proper technical discipline for dealing with such cases, ought no longer to be viewed as a licentious mode of style, but as the just style in respect of those licentious circumstances. And the true art for such popular display is to contrive the best forms for appearing to say something new when in reality you are but echoing yourself; to break up massy chords into running variations; and to mask, by slight differences in the manner, a virtual identity in the substance.

Here is a fair synopsis of two branches of rhetoric, invention and style; and here, as elsewhere in De Quincey, we are made to see that invention and style are two phases—an inner and an outer phase—of the same process.

One heresy into which De Quincey never fell is that rhetoric has to do primarily with the disposition of words or the application of verbal embellishment. Even when he thought of it as fanciful play, the objects played with, as may be seen in passages already quoted, were ideas. He contrives to make clear throughout that the process of rhetorical invention is a mode of thinking. In his tribute to Burke the climax is capped in this sentence: "His great and peculiar distinction was that he viewed all objects of the understanding under more relations than other men, and under more complex relations." What is this but a tribute to Burke's powers of rhetorical invention—and incidentally to rhetorical invention as mental discipline?

We have just gone over De Quincey's prescriptions for handling an idea which is to be presented rhetorically: "varying the modes of presenting it—now putting it directly before the eye, now obliquely, now in an abstract shape, now in the concrete." Readers familiar with Winans' *Public Speaking* will recall the many pages of

that book which treat of this process,¹ for which Professor Winans finds a psychological basis in such statements as these, which he quotes from Angell and James:

"To keep a thought alive . . . keep turning it over and over, keep doing something with it"; "roll it over and over incessantly and consider different aspects of it in turn." "Ask questions of it; examine it from all sides." (P. 79.)

And readers familiar with Aristotle's *Rhetoric* may see in that author's formidable lists of "topics" an ambitious attempt to provide a complete technique for this process of examining from all sides an idea "up" for rhetorical treatment.

Newman, in his address entitled "Literature,"² quotes from *Macbeth*:

Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased,
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,
Raze out the written troubles of the brain,
And, with some sweet oblivious antidote,
Cleanse the foul bosom of that perilous stuff,
Which weighs upon the heart?

and then proceeds, "Here a simple idea, by a *process which belongs to the orator* rather than to the poet. . . ." Yes, this process which Aristotle examined so acutely and so minutely, this process which arose in the "licentious circumstances" of the public assembly, is one of the contributions of rhetoric to poetry. We meet it in Shakespeare and Milton and Shelley; we see a bravura exhibition of it when Cyrano heaps up a cumulation of possible jests about his nose; but what we are likely to forget, unless a De Quincey comes along to remind us, is that the place of its nativity and early culture was the law court, the *bema*, or the forum; or, perhaps better, the battlefield where the prehistoric general harangued the drawn lines of his troops. Rhetorical invention is a mode of thinking; and if the school rhetorics of the nineteenth century had followed De Quincey, Whately, and Newman, instead of Blair and Bain, we should not now find rhetoric so far from the minds of educators

¹ A. E. Phillips, in his *Effective Speaking* (Chicago, 1910), also analyzes this process helpfully, with Cumulation, Specific Instance, General Illustration, and Restatement as some of the main headings in his analysis. It is significant, in view of what is said below with reference to rhetorical invention in poetry, that most of Phillips' illustrative material is drawn from Shakespeare.

² In *The Idea of a University*.

when they are looking about for "some way to make students think."

It is almost unnecessary to enforce the point by calling attention to our author's insistence that a speaker's or writer's diction, sentence structure, and figures (in short, what is loosely called his style) constitute the *incarnation*, not the *clothing* or *dressing*, of his thought. A less obvious wing of the main position here described is to be found in De Quincey's theory of the rhetorical enthymeme as treated in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. Although at first sight the passage dealing with this subject may seem to be merely the facetious stirring up of a mare's nest, there is more in it than that. Briefly, De Quincey called attention to the idea, advanced before him by Facciolati (and before him by one Pacio), that the rhetorical enthymeme, as treated by Aristotle, is not, like the logical enthymeme, merely a syllogism with one part omitted. A rhetorical enthymeme, in this view, is a syllogism (whether completely or partially expressed, it does not matter) of which the premises are drawn from probable rather than from demonstrated knowledge. In the light of this theory, which a close study of the *Rhetoric* seems to support, we see that the difference between rhetorical and other forms of discourse is an essential rather than a superficial one. It is in the subject matter itself. The mode of thinking which is rhetorical invention demands a methodology of inference different from that of rigorously logical thinking. And whether or not this difference is recognized by Aristotle, every working rhetorician, whether statesman or writer of advertisements for tooth paste, utilizes it. This it is that makes the scientist fight shy of rhetoric, or of a "popular" presentation of his science; and conversely, this it is that makes the lay audience dread the scientist. No matter how lucidly and intelligibly the scientist may speak, we do not feel that he has made a speech—unless perchance he has used an abundance of analogy, a form of inference unsatisfactory to logic but honored by rhetoric.

To sum up our observations thus far: De Quincey teaches that the rhetorical process, the process of *presenting an idea attractively*, whether as a display of power, in play, in poetic exuberance, or for a persuasive purpose, involves an inner and an outer activity. The inner activity we may call rhetorical invention; the outer, rhetorical style. The first is a mode of thinking about one's subject, turning

the subject over in one's mind, and viewing it in as many relations as possible. The second is the incarnation in speech of the thoughts (or of a selection from the thoughts) engendered by the preceding mental activity.¹ No one has shown so well the organic union of these two.

II

Let us turn briefly to De Quincey's rhetorical practice. Here again we have a bewildering variety from which to choose. We shall be on safest ground, perhaps, if we avoid the heights, where De Quincey produces something *sui generis*, and confine our examination to such writing as we find in his book reviews and literary essays. Here he is aiming primarily at interest—that favorable interest, we might say, which is persuasion in the first degree. How does he attain it? A specimen or two will show that he attains it precisely by that process which we have already found him analyzing.

Suppose we turn to a paragraph of his review of Schlosser's *History of the Eighteenth Century*.² Reduced to the headings of a brief, this paragraph would appear:

A. Schlosser's statement that Pope's translation of the "Odyssey" was the work of hired help is an exaggeration, for

1. Pope translated twelve books of the "Odyssey" himself.

Now let us choose from De Quincey's paragraph the clauses which embody this minimum of idea—the logical or factual skeleton. These are the "massy chords" which he must break up into "running variations":

Of Pope's "Homer" Schlosser thinks fit to say . . . "that Pope pocketed the subscription of the 'Odyssey,' and then left the work to be done by understrappers." Don't tell fibs, Schlosser. . . . Pope personally translated one-half of the "Odyssey." . . . This is the truth of the matter.

¹ Readers familiar with the classical division of rhetoric into the steps of *inventio*, *dispositio*, *elocutio*, *memoria*, and *pronuntiatio*, will see that De Quincey is most full upon *inventio* and *elocutio*. The last two he virtually omits, as they have no application to written discourse. His slighting of *dispositio*, or arrangement, is a defect alike of his theory and of his practice. Another defect of his theory (attributable, perhaps, to the fact that in practice he never actually faced his audience) is his incomplete recognition of the audience as one of the determining factors in the rhetorical situation, and especially as a source of inventive topics.

² The passage chosen appears in Masson, XI, 32.

But that is not enough to satisfy the rhetorically minded De Quincey: if he is to think this thought at all, he must think it in more relations than appear in this skeleton; and if the reader is to be interested, the thought must be exhibited from more angles and must be related to other interesting ideas. So with the addition of concessions, analogies, and repetitions, the paragraph appears as follows:

Of Pope's "Homer" Schlosser thinks fit to say,—amongst other evil things, which it really *does* deserve (though hardly in comparison with the German hexametrical "Homer" of the ear-splitting Voss),—"that Pope pocketed the subscription of the 'Odyssey,' and left the work to be done by his understrappers." Don't tell fibs, Schlosser. Never do *that* any more. True it is, and disgraceful enough in itself without lying, that Pope (like modern contractors for a railway or a loan) let off to sub-contractors several portions of the undertaking. He was perhaps not illiberal in the terms of his contracts. At least I know of people now-a-days (much better artists) that would execute such contracts, and enter into any penalties for keeping time, at thirty per cent less. But *navvies* and bill-brokers, that are in excess now, then were scarce. Still the affair, though not mercenary, was illiberal in a higher sense of art; and no anecdote shows more pointedly Pope's sense of the mechanic fashion in which his own previous share of the Homeric labour had been executed. It was disgraceful enough, and needs no exaggeration. Let it, therefore, be reported truly. Pope personally translated one-half of the "Odyssey"—a dozen books he turned out of his own oven; and if you add the "Batrachomyomachia," his dozen was a baker's dozen. The journeymen did the other twelve; were regularly paid; regularly turned off when the job was out of hand; and never once had to "strike for wages." How much beer was allowed I cannot say. This is the truth of the matter. So no more fibbing, Schlosser, if you please.

Anyone interested may find it an instructive pastime to analyze De Quincey's method in detail, noticing at what points the analogies are applied, to what degree they are elaborated, and how often some phases of the thought are repeated. By my count, the idea "Schlosser is exaggerating (or fibbing)" is stated or broadly implied no less than six times. Well, it is the main idea of the paragraph, and hence the axis, or point of reference, of the whole. Yet the question may be raised, is the rhetorical process overdone in this paragraph? For a reader whose sole purpose is to learn the exact truth about Pope's share of the translation, yes. But for the reader to whom it is addressed, the reader who must be kept interested, no. Let anyone begin reading, without prejudice, the review from which this is taken; he is likely to continue to the end

of its forty-five pages and lay it down with the prayer that all book reviews might be as interesting and as cogent. He may decide, incidentally, that H. L. Mencken has learned something from De Quincey.

Is there any gain, besides interest, resulting from the process exemplified in De Quincey's paragraph? There is some casual information, such as that concerning Voss's German translation of Homer. But more than that, the finished paragraph leaves us with some rather definite emotional attitudes—slight scorn for Schlosser, somewhat lessened respect for Pope, and perhaps grateful confidence in De Quincey who has set us right. None of all this appears in the brief; and it is such disparity between the content of a speech or argument, as briefed, and its content as spoken or written, that encourages some observers to emphasize the separation of matter and manner. The emotional attitudes conveyed result from the *manner*, they argue. And with that we are back again in the doctrine that rhetorical style is something *added to* the thought of a speaker or writer. But such a view assigns too essential a value to that portion of one's subject matter which can be briefed. Is it not true that the brief, far from being the skeleton of the finished argument, is likely to be something less than a picture of the skeleton? We have perfected no instrument for reducing to heads the matter of rhetorical discourse—that complex of ideas, images, and emotional attitudes associated under stress of impulses from the audience and occasion and under the curb of the speaker's purpose.

The second paragraph chosen for illustrative purposes, I find, is likewise one of refutation. It may be interesting to compare this with our first, noticing that while some additional methods of rhetorical invention are utilized, the general structure is similar and the maneuver of making a concession and then returning strongly to the attack reappears. The argument may be briefed thus:¹

A. Gilfillan's charge that Dr. Johnson was indolent is obviously a mistaken one, for

1. Johnson's voluminous and painstaking literary work refutes it.

De Quincey's paragraph follows:

Another paradox of Mr. Gilfillan's under this head is that he classes Dr. Johnson as indolent; and it is the more startling because he does not

¹ The paragraph is from De Quincey's notes on Gilfillan's *Literary Portraits*, Masson, XI, 380.

utter it as a careless opinion upon which he might have been thrown by inconsideration, but as a concession extorted from him reluctantly: he had sought to evade it, but could not. Now, that Dr. Johnson had a morbid predisposition to decline labour from his scrofulous habit of body is probable. The question for us, however, is not what nature prompted him to do, but what he did. If he had an extra difficulty to fight with in attempting to labour, the more was his merit in the known result,—that he *did* fight with that difficulty and that he conquered it. This is undeniable. And the attempt to deny it presents itself in a comic shape when one imagines some ancient shelf in a library, that has groaned for nearly a century under the weight of the doctor's works, demanding "How say you? Is this Sam Johnson, whose Dictionary alone is a load for a camel, one of those authors whom you call idle? Then Heaven preserve us poor oppressed book-shelves from such as you will consider active." George III, in a compliment as happily turned as any one of those ascribed to Louis XIV, expressed his opinion upon this question of the Doctor's industry by saying that he also should join in thinking Johnson too voluminous a contributor to literature were it not for the extraordinary merit of the contributions. Now, it would be an odd way of turning the royal praise into a reproach if we should say: "Sam, had you been a pretty good writer, we, your countrymen, should have held you to be also an industrious writer; but, because you are a *very* good writer, therefore we pronounce you a lazy vagabond."

Now a teacher of rhetoric can hardly make as an assignment to a student: "Present the facts concerning Pope's own share in the translation of the 'Odyssey,' relating these facts with railway contractors, bill-brokers, navvies, an oven, beer, and striking for wages"; or, "Refute the charge against Johnson of indolence, bringing in book-shelves and making them talk, comparing the wit of George III with that of Louis XIV, and ending with a jocular apostrophe to Johnson, addressing him as 'Sam.'" Yet is it not the ability to do just that sort of thing which the teacher tries—by hook or crook, by fair means or foul, by pleas to "use your imagination" and to "make it concrete"—to develop? As to actual means of instruction, our precious pedagogical devices, we can hardly look for them in De Quincey. He gives us some models and helps to clarify our aims. And he does more: he points us away from that sort of rhetoric which is largely an *ex post facto* critical apparatus, emphasizing nomenclature, classification, and theme *correction*, to the older discipline (never wholly extinct, but certainly under a cloud for some generations) which was largely a mode of procedure for the *preparation* of a theme or speech.

Our suggestion that De Quincey gives us models needs some

qualification. His faults are obvious—and they are the faults resulting from an excess of the very faculty we have noticed in him. Or perhaps we may say that he has one fault—that of digression.¹ Such pleasure does he take in turning an idea over and over and relating it to other interesting ideas, that he frequently extends the process beyond use or reason. “De Quincey, however, offends beyond the possibility of justification,” writes Professor Minto, “overloading his sentences in a gossiping kind of way with particulars that have no relevance whatever to the main statement.” It is the fault of the rhetorician who forgets the limits set by the patience and docility of his audience, and who, in the elaboration of minutiae, even forgets his theme. Such a one is a familiar figure: he was familiar in Rome, as is evidenced by Martial’s epigram to the lawyer Postumus (VI, xix), which has been translated thus:

My action is not for assault, or wounding, or poisoning: it concerns my three she-goats; I complain that they are lost by my neighbor’s theft; this is the fact which the judge prescribes to be proved to him. You, with a mighty voice and every gesture you know, make the court ring with Cannæ, and the Mithridatic war, and insensate Punic perjuries, and Sullas, and Mariuses, and Mucius. Now mention, Postumus, my three she-goats.

And Martial was only rewriting, in terms of Roman history, an older epigram of the Greek Anthology.

So with De Quincey. When, in the midst of “Style,” we find ourselves involved in a long discussion of the hypothesis that great men appear in galaxies, with quotations from C. Velleius Paterculus and comparisons of the age of Leo X with that of Louis XIV and that of Shakespeare, we feel like saying, “Now mention, De Quincey, *style*.” As we have seen, De Quincey in one of his moods made a virtue of fanciful vagaries. He thought that one was only a *pure* rhetorician when he gave his fancy free rein to wander where it would. But we can hardly grant that one is a good rhetorician, or even a mediocre one, when he forgets his audience and his theme and his purpose, prime factors, all of them, in the rhetorical equation.

¹ H. M. Paull, in “De Quincey—and Style” (*Fortnightly Review*, CXII (1922), 152) argues that De Quincey does not live up to the precepts of his essay, “Style.” He condemns the colloquialism of Greek writers, for instance, and yet is himself colloquial. He ridiculed the long, involved sentences of German prose, but himself writes sentences of great length and involution. The first of these points is a small one; and I think De Quincey’s practice is to be preferred, in this case, to his precept. His long, involved sentences are a manifestation of that exuberant power of invention which we have discussed.

Perhaps this one defect was all that barred De Quincey from being supreme in persuasive art—the lack of that will, always manifest in great orators, which sternly subordinates means to ends, making the speaker forego indulgence in fanciful or playful or even eloquent digressions in the interest of the persuasive victory to be won. Yet when all is said, we can still go to him for models of rhetorical invention, as a process in itself, regardless of his use or abuse of the process. He is among the greatest tacticians, however weak he may be in major strategy.

III

But we have not exhausted so much as a tithe of De Quincey's ideas on rhetoric and public speaking. So fertile is his thinking and so voluminous his information that many an unconsidered fragment, thrown in by the way, is worth gathering into our basket. We cannot gather them all, for there are more than twelve baskets full. We have said nothing of his treatment of the influence of national or racial characteristics, as present in audiences, upon rhetorical style. Under this heading his description of the Athenian audience and its effect upon the style of Demosthenes is probably most suggestive. But it should be read only in connection with his similar treatment of the Roman audiences addressed by Cicero and of the audience of Fox and Burke in the House of Commons.

Perhaps still more striking, as more original, is De Quincey's thesis concerning the effects upon style of methods of publication. "Did the reader ever happen to reflect on the great idea of *publication*?" he asks, and is off for a dozen pages. And there is more in these pages than a clever "botanico-mechanical interpretation [of Greek style] in the lack of linen rags in the ash barrels of ancient Greece."¹ Here are clues to a whole branch of rhetorical study, a branch dealing with the technique of publicity in its relation to the rhetorical and literary expression of a given period. Sporadic attempts at such investigations have been made by literary critics and by sociologists, but there is much to be done. Literary tendencies are usually analyzed in terms of earlier literary tendencies, with historical events, such as wars and revolutions, coming in for a vague share; such factors as freedom or censorship of speech and the press, the rise of cheap printing, the convenience of assembly or

¹ The phrase is Professor Brewster's, in the Introduction to his *Representative Essays on the Theory of Style*, New York, 1911.

communication, are too often overlooked. The oration and the drama reached a high degree of perfection in Greece, says De Quincey, because the chief means of publication were oral. He might have added that the Greeks were also rather fond of carving inscriptions on stone or metal and hence perfected the epigram to an equal degree. Could not one, following such clues, explain why the modern novel was developed when and as it was? In such light, is there not added significance in the fact that the great stories of the world survived the Middle Ages chiefly in the form of *exempla* used in sermons? Or in the renascence of drama in the same period in connection with services of the church? To follow De Quincey's clue, one would have to take into account the size and architecture of auditoriums, stages, theatres, and pulpits. Or coming to recent phenomena, one might study the vogue of pamphleteering, the rise of the newspaper, and the significance of radio broadcasting as a means of publication. Is there a "Chautauqua style," and if so, is it determined largely by the audience, or are both audience and style controlled by the physical aspects of Chautauqua? Will the English of headlines and the devices of billboard advertising invade poetry and uncommercial rhetoric? What of the appalling multiplication of pictures in recent publicity, and of pictorial communication—will all this have its effect upon the speaker and writer? These are a few of the questions suggested by De Quincey's twelve pages.

In another section of De Quincey's "Style" we find the following passage, thrown in by way of illustration, which embodies a suggestive application of a principle drawn from such study as we have been considering:

Punctuation, trivial as such an innovation may seem, was the product of typography; and it is interesting to trace the effects upon style even of that one slight addition to the resources of logic. Previously a man was driven to depend for his security against misunderstanding upon the pure virtue of his syntax. Miscollocation or dislocation of related words disturbed the whole sense; its least effect was to give *no* sense,—often it gave a dangerous sense. Now, punctuation was an artificial machinery for maintaining the integrity of the sense against all mistakes of the writer; and, as one consequence, it withdrew the energy of men's anxieties from the natural machinery, which lay in just and careful arrangement.¹

The passage is reinforced by a footnote too extended for quotation. Incidentally, the point of this passage supports the position of those

¹ Masson, X, 164-5.

of us who hold that the norm of good writing is good speaking. And it is to be observed that never does one realize the artificiality of punctuation so much as when one attempts by reading aloud to translate writing into speaking.

Nothing De Quincey has to say directly about the organic nature of style is so convincing as is his treatment of the styles of Herodotus, Thucydides, and Plato. His discussion of Herodotus may be said to set a model for the most fruitful type of rhetorical criticism. He considers the character of the historian, his audience, and his method of publication. With reference to the audience, De Quincey is most full on the topic of the state of mind of the Greek public at the time when the work of Herodotus appeared. But he enters still more thoroughly into the subject matter of his author, evidently considering that the controlling factor. The result of it all is that, without De Quincey's having directly characterized or described the style of Herodotus, the reader finds himself, at the end of three pages, thoroughly familiar with it. And in connection with this, or elsewhere in the essays we are considering, one may find sketches, at least, for similar treatments of Plato and Isocrates, of Francis Bacon, Fox, Sheridan, Burke, and others.

We are reduced to cataloguing. That discerning injunction to listen to the speech and read the letters of cultivated women, in order to apprehend the best possibilities of a living language—who will gainsay it? The several pages, scattered here and there, on French eloquence—where is there better criticism of its kind? And that part of a paragraph which contrasts the forensic with the deliberative speaker—how well it says what many of us grope for when we attempt to contrast English and American debating! And how many of our most important recent developments of rhetorical theory are to be found, in germ, in the following passage at the end of "Conversation":

Many other suggestions for the improvement of conversation might be brought forward within ampler limits; and especially for that class of conversation which moves by discussion a whole code of regulations might be proposed that would equally promote the interests of the individual speakers and the public interests of the truth involved in the question discussed. Meantime nobody is more aware than we are that no style of conversation is more essentially vulgar than that which moves by disputation. This is the vice of the young and the inexperienced, but especially of those amongst them who are fresh from academic life. But discussion is not necessarily dispu-

tation; and the two orders of conversation—*that*, on the one hand, which contemplates an interest of knowledge and of the self-developing intellect; *that*, on the other hand, which forms one and the widest amongst the gay embellishments of life—will always advance together. Whatever there may remain of illiberal in the first (for, according to the remark of Burke, there is always something illiberal in the severer aspects of study until balanced by the influence of social amenities) will correct itself, or will tend to correct itself, by the model held up in the second, and thus the great organ of social intercourse by means of speech, which hitherto has done little for man, except through the channel of its ministrations to the direct *business* of daily necessities, will at length rise into a rivalry with books, and become fixed amongst the alliances of intellectual progress, not less than amongst the ornamental accomplishments of convivial life.

Strange indeed is the fate that has made generally known, of all De Quincey's fertile and prophetic ideas in literary criticism, only that questionable distinction between literature of knowledge and literature of power.¹ And it is sad to reflect that, copious as we find his "Style," the essay is but a fragment. The enticing prospectus placed near the middle of it, in which the author promises to mark out "for subsequent cultivation and development all the possible subdivisions and sections amongst the resources of the rhetorician, all the powers which he can employ, and therefore all the difficulties which he needs to study"—this is never fulfilled. "Were this done," says De Quincey, "we should no longer see those incoherent sketches which are now circulating in the world upon questions of taste, of science, of practical address, as applied to the management of style and rhetoric; the public ear would no longer be occupied by feeble Frenchmen—Rollin, Rapin, Batteux, Bouhours, Du Bos, and *id genus omne*; nor by the elegant but desultory Blair; nor by scores of others who bring an occasional acuteness or casual information to this or that subsection of their duty, whilst (taken as general guides) they are universally insufficient." "Were this done"—alas, it was not done; and his description of rhetorical instruction (with the addition of the numbing system of dryasdust Bain) holds good for the latter half of the nineteenth century as well as for the earlier. Yet, as has been suggested on another page,

¹The present writer finds himself in full accord with the judgment of J. H. Fowler, *De Quincey as a Literary Critic*, Pamphlet 52 of The English Association (July, 1922): "There is indeed one definition or distinction of his which has been widely quoted and accepted, but which, I am bound to confess, does not seem to me really profound or valuable—I mean his famous distinction between literature of knowledge and literature of power."

in reading De Quincey, fragmentary and desultory as he is, we catch a spirit which, allowed to operate, would transform all this; we hear echoes of a great past, and prophetic whispers of a return, in education, to that rhetoric which can be and should be "the *organon* of all studies."

IV

So the last word is, read De Quincey. For an eloquent enunciation of this word I am turning to a page in one of those little volumes which treasure up for us "the life-blood of a master spirit," Hiram Corson. To this writer all who in recent years have concerned themselves with the oral expression of literary content, felt deeply and mastered thoroughly, owe a great debt. Corson says:

For range of power, for great diversity of subject, for poetic, philosophic, and logical cast of mind, for depth of feeling, for an *inspiring vitality of thinking*, for periodic and impassioned prose which, running through the whole gamut of expression, is unequalled in English Literature, no more educating author could be selected for advanced students than Thomas De Quincey. A good education in the language as a living organism, could be got through his writings alone; and his wealth and vitality of thought and feeling could hardly fail, unless opposed by extraordinary obtuseness, to excite and enliven, and strengthen the best faculties of thought and feeling in any reader. How much a student might do for himself, by loyally reading all of De Quincey's Works, as they are presented in Dr. Masson's edition!¹

¹ *The Aims of Literary Study*, New York, 1906, pp. 60-1. The italics are Corson's.

EMERSON AND ORAL DISCOURSE

THEODORE T. STENBERG

"Speech is power: speech is to persuade, to convert, to compel. It is to bring another out of his bad sense into your good sense."¹

I

AMERICA'S greatest thinker was also a lifelong and assiduous student and practitioner of the art of oral discourse. Moreover, he entertained some hope of becoming a teacher of the art. At the age of fifty-eight, he wrote these significant words: "Why has never the poorest country college offered me a professorship of rhetoric? I think I could have taught an orator, though I am none."² The first sentence quoted is manifestly an expression of disappointment.

No one who reads Emerson's *Journals* can fail to note that a good deal of space is devoted to comment on eloquence and on orators. The present writer, in taking notes on the *Journals* preparatory to the writing of this account, has jotted down the word *eloquence* in a hundred and three different contexts. As regards orators, these notes contain a hundred and forty-two references to Webster, sixty-one to Everett, fifty-two to Channing, forty-six to Burke, nineteen to Choate, sixteen to Phillips, fifteen to Demosthenes, six to Chatham. In addition, the names of many other speakers appear one or more times. This interest in public speaking, as the *Journals* make sufficiently evident, was continuous throughout Emerson's long career. It is also of significance, in this connection, that the first lecture on *Eloquence* was written twenty years before the second, the date of the first being 1847 and that of the second 1867.³

¹ *The Complete Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. E. W. Emerson, Boston and New York, 1903-4 (Centenary Edition), VIII, 92.

² *Journals of Ralph Waldo Emerson, with Annotations*, ed. E. W. Emerson and W. E. Forbes, Boston and New York, 1909-14, IX, 413.

³ *Works*, VII, 364, 366.

Emerson descended from an almost unbroken line of clergymen. That this circumstance had an important bearing on his preoccupation with oratory can hardly be doubted. At the age of twenty, he expressed his own view of the matter in these words: "I inherit from my sire a formality of manner and speech, but I derive from him, or from his patriotic parent, a passionate love for the strains of eloquence. I burn after the *aliquid immensum infinitumque* which Cicero desired."¹

As a boy, Emerson naturally manifested this "passionate love for the strains of eloquence" mainly in declamation. His son, Dr. Edward Waldo Emerson, relates the following: "A gentleman, who in his youth was clerk in Deacon White's store, tells us that he used to love to hear the small Ralph declaim, and would capture him when he came on an errand and set him, nothing loath, on a sugar barrel whence he would entertain his earliest Concord audience, the chance frequenters of the grocery, with recitations of poetry, very likely Campbell's 'Glenara' or the Kosciuski passage, or statelier verses from Milton."² Emerson himself also has something to offer on this point: "I was a little chubby boy trundling a hoop in Chauncy Place, and spouting poetry from Scott and Campbell at the Latin School."³

Nor did this interest in declamation die out as he grew older. Dr. Emerson says: "He took the greatest interest in our recitation of poetry, and pleased himself that no one of us could sing, for he said he thought that he had observed that the two gifts of singing and oratory did not go together. Good declamation he highly prized, and used to imitate for us the recitation of certain demigods of the college in those days when all the undergraduates went with interest to hear the Seniors declaim.

"On our return from school after 'Speaking Afternoon' he always asked, 'Did you do well?' 'I don't know.' 'Did the boys study or play, or did they sit still and look at you?' 'Several of them didn't attend.' 'But you must *oblige* them to. If the orator doesn't command his audience they will command him.'"⁴

Emerson was not, however, blind to the dangers of declamation in the opprobrious sense, and of empty rhetoric. Referring to the

¹ *Journals*, I, 363.

² *Emerson in Concord*, Boston, 1895, p. 17.

³ *Journals*, VI, 305.

⁴ *Emerson in Concord*, p. 173.

college declamations and rhetorical exhibitions of his young manhood, he exclaims: "What fools a few sounding sentences and verses made of me and my mates!"¹ In another context he says: "There is nevertheless a foolish belief among teachers that the multitude are not wise enough to discern between good manner and good matter, and that voice and rhetoric will stand, instead of truth. They can tell well enough whether they have been convinced or no. The multitude suppose often that great talents are necessary to produce the elaborate harangues which they hear without emotion of consequence, and so they say, What a fine speaker, What a good discourse; but they will not leave any agreeable employment to go again, and never will do a single thing in consequence of having heard the discourse. But let them hear one of these God-taught teachers and they will surrender to him. They leave their work to come again; they go home and think and talk and act as he said. Men know truth as quick as they see it."²

While a student at Harvard, Emerson one year took the Boylston prize for declamation.³ The mere externals of public speaking still seem to have attracted him rather more than the substance. The editors of the *Journals* say: "The florid oratory then in vogue, especially of the young Southerners, had, for a time, a great attraction for the New England boy."⁴ While a sophomore, he helped to organize a literary society, the rules and regulations of which were drawn up by him and two other members. These rules contain two sentences which throw some light on his views at this stage: "The great design of public education is to qualify men for usefulness in active life, and the principal arts by which we can be useful are those of writing and speaking. . . . We are told by those from whose decision there is no appeal that by constant, unwearied practice only can facility and excellence in these arts be attained."⁵

But his greatest Harvard experience was his coming under the spell of Everett. The *Journals* furnish abundant evidence of the importance of this influence. Two years after his graduation, when the spell had to some extent been broken, he writes these words concerning one of Everett's lectures: "Though the lecture contained nothing original, and no very remarkable views, yet it was an account

¹ *Works*, III, 295.

² *Journals*, II, 296-7.

³ *Works*, VII, 365.

⁴ *Journals*, I, 120-1.

⁵ *Journals*, I, 35.

of antiquities bearing everywhere that 'fine Roman hand,' and presented in the inimitable style of *our Cicero*." ¹ That this influence had lasting results is made plain in a statement written eighteen years after graduation: "Everett has put more stories, sentences, verses, names in amber for me than any other person." ² Four years later he records a detailed estimate, only a part of which follows: "There was an influence on the young people from Everett's genius which was almost comparable to that of Pericles in Athens. That man had an inspiration that did not go beyond his head, but which made him the genius of elegance. He had a radiant beauty of person, of a classic style, a heavy, large eye, marble lids, which gave the impression of mass which the slightness of his form needed, sculptured lips, a voice of such rich tones, such precise and perfect utterance that, although slightly nasal, it was the most mellow and beautiful and correct of all the instruments of the time. The word that he spoke, in the manner in which he spoke it, became current and classical in New England." ³ But Everett's limitations are very clear to him: "Meantime all this was a pure triumph of Rhetoric. This man had neither intellectual nor moral principles to teach. He had no thoughts. It was early asked . . . what truths he had thrown into circulation, and how he had enriched the general mind, and agreed that only in graces of manner, only in a new perception of Grecian beauty, had he opened our eyes." ⁴

Shortly after his graduation, Emerson heard one of Channing's sermons, and expresses his admiration in these words: "The language was a transparent medium, conveying with the utmost distinctness the pictures in his mind to the mind of the hearers." ⁵ And when Webster was chosen representative to Congress in 1822, Emerson writes the following semiprophetic sentence: "A victory is achieved today for one whose name perchance is written highest in the volume of futurity." ⁶ Webster was soon to become his ideal in the realm of American oratory. Says John Burroughs: "Emerson's description and praise and criticism of Webster form some of the most notable pages in his *Journal*." ⁷

¹ *Journals*, I, 207.

² *Journals*, IV, 471.

³ *Journals*, VI, 255.

⁴ *Journals*, VI, 256-7.

⁵ *Journals*, I, 290.

⁶ *Journals*, I, 175.

⁷ *The Last Harvest*, Boston, 1922, p. 61.

As a young clergyman and lecturer he glories in his opportunity: "The high prize of eloquence may be mine, the joy of uttering what no other can utter, and what all must receive."¹ Little by little he drifted away from the pulpit; and during the latter half of his life the lecture was his sole medium for public address. At the age of thirty-six, he says: "I look upon the Lecture-room as the true church of today and as the home of a richer eloquence than Faneuil Hall or the Capitol ever knew."² Again: "A lecture is a new literature, which leaves aside all tradition, time, place, circumstance, and addresses an assembly as mere human beings, no more. It has never yet been done well. It is an organ of sublime power, a panharmonicon for variety of note."³ Professor Bliss Perry's judgment is correct: "The oral impulse was strong in this descendant of eloquent sires, the admiring auditor of Everett and Webster, the unwearied searcher and practitioner of the mysteries of the spoken word."⁴

Perhaps it is not amiss to end this account of the development of Emerson's interest in oral discourse with two glowing tributes to the art. At the age of nineteen, two years after graduation from college, he writes what purports to be the glorious history of eloquence: "The new capacities and desires which burned in the human breast, demanded a correspondent perfection in speech,—to body them forth. Then a voice was heard in the assemblies of men, which sounded like the language of the gods; it rolled like music on the ear, and filled the mind with indefinable longings; it was peremptory as the word of kings; or mournful as a widow wailing; or enkindling as the martial clarion. That voice men called Eloquence, and he that had it unlocked their hearts, or turned their actions whithersoever he would. Like sea-waves to the shore, like mountain sheep to their shepherd, so men crowded around this commander of their hearts to drink in his accents, and to mould their passions to his will. The contagion of new desires and improvements went abroad,—and tribe after tribe of barbarians uplifted the banner of Refinement. This spirit-stirring art was propagated also, and although its light sunk often in the socket, it was never put out. Time rolled, and successive ages rapidly developed the mixed and mighty drama of human society, and among the instruments em-

¹ *Journals*, III, 345.

² *Journals*, V, 298.

³ *Journals*, V, 234.

⁴ *The Praise of Folly and Other Papers*, Boston, 1923, p. 117.

ployed therein, this splendid art was often and actively used. And who that has witnessed its strength, and opened every chamber of his soul to the matchless enchanter, does not venerate it as the noblest agent that God works with in human hearts? My Muse, it is the idol of thy homage, and deserves the dedication of thine outpourings."¹ Sixteen years later, he records how he was affected by the words of an orator whom he does not name (one feels tempted to venture the guess that it was Webster): "I thought I saw the sun and moon fall into his head, as seeds fall into the ground, that they might quicken and bring forth new worlds to fill nature."²

II

Before proceeding to examine what this devotee of eloquence has to offer on the theory and practice of the art, it is well to cast a glance at his influence as an orator. And in this matter the judgment of his contemporaries is of prime importance.

Says Lowell: "It is a singular fact that Mr. Emerson is the most steadily attractive lecturer in America. . . . A lecturer now for something like a third of a century, one of the pioneers of the lecturing system, the charm of his voice, his manner, and his matter has never lost its power over his earlier hearers, and continually winds new ones into its enchanting meshes. . . . No doubt, Emerson, like all original men, has his peculiar audience, and yet I know none that can hold a promiscuous crowd in pleased attention so long as he. As in all original men, there is something for every palate. . . . For us the whole life of the man is distilled in the clear drop of every sentence, and behind each word we divine the force of a noble character, the weight of a large capital of thinking and being."³ Says Holmes: "As to the charm of his lectures all are agreed."⁴ And Alcott: "Emerson has triumphed, . . . the large hall in the Temple was filled; and the audience the choicest that could be gathered in New England."⁵

As to Emerson's influence on the young minds of the time, Lowell

¹ *Journals*, I, 233-4.

² *Journals*, V, 80.

³ *The Writings of James Russell Lowell in Prose and Poetry* (Riverside Edition), Boston, 1897, I, 349-53.

⁴ *Ralph Waldo Emerson*, Boston, 1897, p. 379.

⁵ *Journals*, V, 159.

again speaks for himself and for the rest: "The delight and the benefit were that he put us in communication with a larger style of thought, sharpened our wits with a more pungent phrase, gave us ravishing glimpses of an ideal under the dry husk of our New England; made us conscious of the supreme and everlasting originality of whatever bit of soul might be in any of us; freed us, in short, from the stocks of prose in which we had sat so long that we had grown wellnigh contented in our cramps."¹

Nor is it necessary to restrict oneself to the testimony of Emerson's countrymen for evidence concerning the power of his speech. Alexander Ireland writes the following: "On Sunday, the 18th of August, 1833, I heard him deliver a discourse in the Unitarian Chapel, Young Street, Edinburgh, and I remember distinctly the effect which it produced on his hearers. It is almost needless to say that nothing like it had ever been heard by them before, and many of them did not know what to make of it. The originality of his thoughts, the consummate beauty of the language in which they were clothed, the calm dignity of his bearing, the absence of all oratorical effort, and the singular directness and simplicity of his manner, free from the least shadow of dogmatic assumption, made a deep impression on me. Not long before this I had listened to a wonderful sermon by Dr. Chalmers, whose force, and energy, and vehement, but rather turgid, eloquence carried, for the moment, all before them. . . . But I must confess that the pregnant thoughts and serene self-possession of the young Boston minister had a greater charm for me than all the rhetorical splendors of Chalmers."²

Two events in Emerson's career as a public speaker deserve separate mention; namely, his oration "The American Scholar" and the "Divinity School Address." The importance of the former has perhaps been fixed in our memory by a sentence from Holmes: "This grand Oration was our intellectual Declaration of Independence."³ The profound influence of the "Divinity School Address" as an expression of religious liberty, has been emphasized, in like manner, by Professor Woodberry, who maintains that "both the academic and the religious proclamation went forth from his lips, in the Phi Beta Kappa oration and the 'Divinity School Address.'"⁴

¹ *The Writings in Prose and Poetry*, I, 354-5.

² Holmes, *Ralph Waldo Emerson*, p. 65.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

⁴ *America in Literature*, New York, 1903, p. 86.

Emerson's own estimate of his oratorical powers is misleading. He was too modest to be a just critic of himself. For example, in the first paragraph of this article there is a clause which shows that he does not wish to call himself an orator. It must be remembered, too, that he was very exacting as a judge of his own efforts. The following quotation from a letter written shortly after the delivery of a course of lectures, is an illustration in point: "But now unhappily the lectures are ended. Ten decorous speeches and not one ecstasy, not one rapture, not one thunderbolt. Eloquence, therefore, there was none."¹ But Parker, after hearing the first of these lectures, says that it was "splendid" and that "Bancroft was in ecstasies."²

The present generation, judging Emerson almost exclusively by his *Essays*, finds it difficult to understand the widespread popular appeal of his lectures. The *Essays* are, however, much more condensed and abstract than were most of the lectures which served as their bases. Says Dr. Emerson: "When the lectures were recast into essays, the final revision was severe; he cut out and condensed heroically."³ Often he drew upon several lectures for one essay. As instances of this practice one has but to call attention to the origin of two of his most popular essays, namely "Self-Reliance" and "The Over-Soul"; each of these contains material from four different lectures.⁴ Perhaps Emerson's subject-matter sometimes made too heavy demands on the intelligence of average humanity. It was his practice, however, to be as simple and concrete as the subject-matter would permit. To quote Dr. Emerson again: "He would not write down to his audience, but had faith in the perception of humble people. On the other hand, he wrote strong English in short sentences, and in delivery introduced frequent anecdotes which would appeal to them, as they always did to him. Many of these were omitted in the severe pruning of the essays for publication."⁵

Nor did Emerson's mysticism stand in the way of his popularity. It may even be questioned whether he should be called a mystic, except in the sense in which almost every poet or idealist can be called so. Holmes is probably near the truth when he says: "Too

¹ J. E. Cabot, *A Memoir of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, Boston, 1887, II, 399.

² *Ibid.*, II, 400.

³ *Emerson in Concord*, p. 219.

⁴ *Works*, II, 389-90, 426-7.

⁵ *Works*, I, 433.

much has been made of Emerson's mysticism. He was an intellectual rather than an emotional mystic, and withal a cautious one. He never let go the string of his balloon."¹ And concerning Emerson's idealism Holmes says: "Emerson was eminently sane for an idealist. He carried the same sagacity into the ideal world that Franklin showed in the affairs of common life."² The *Journals* furnish the following pertinent definition: "We are idealists whenever we prefer an idea to a sensation."³ In fact, his exalted vision seems to have been one of the main sources of his power. Says Henry James (Senior): "Incontestably the main thing about him, however, as I have already said, was that he brought you face to face with the infinite in humanity."⁴ And J. E. Cabot: "What gave Emerson his position among those who influence thought was not so much what he said, or how he said it, as what made him say it,—the open vision of things spiritual across the disfigurements and contradictions of the actual."⁵

In the matter of voice Emerson was adequately equipped. Holmes says: "Emerson's voice had a great charm in conversation, as in the lecture-room. It was never loud, never shrill, but singularly penetrating."⁶ This statement agrees with those of Dr. Emerson and Alcott: "His own voice in reading or speaking was agreeable, flexible and varied, with power unexpected from a man of his slender chest. His friend Mr. Alcott said of him 'that some of his organs were free, some fated: the voice was entirely liberated, and his poems and essays were not rightly published until he read them.'"⁷ And these are the words of Alexander Ireland: "His voice was the sweetest, the most winning and penetrating of any I ever heard; nothing like it have I listened to since."⁸

As regards Emerson's diction, Lowell has this to say: "A diction at once so rich and so homely as his I know not where to match in these days of writing by the page; it is like homespun cloth-of-gold."⁹ As to the style in general, Holmes says: "Emerson's style is epigrammatic, incisive, authoritative, sometimes quaint, never obscure, except

¹ *Ralph Waldo Emerson*, p. 396.

² *Ibid.*, p. 366.

³ *Journals*, IV, 11.

⁴ *Literary Remains*, Boston, 1885, p. 301.

⁵ *A Memoir of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, II, 627.

⁶ *Ralph Waldo Emerson*, p. 363.

⁷ *Emerson in Concord*, p. 165.

⁸ Holmes, *Ralph Waldo Emerson*, p. 65.

⁹ *The Writings in Prose and Poetry*, I, 351.

when he is handling nebulous subjects.”¹ A few examples will make the matter clearer. One of the lectures bore the realistic title “Civilization at a Pinch.”² For epigrammatic and imaginative force the two following sentences will serve: “Language is fossil poetry,”³ “Inspiration is like yeast.”⁴ For simple majesty and swift climax: “Speak to his heart, and the man becomes suddenly virtuous,”⁵ “Great is the soul, and plain.”⁶ For beauty of rhythm and elaborate climax: “It is easy in the world to live after the world’s opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after our own; but the great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude.”⁷ For epigrammatic balance: “The only reward of virtue is virtue; the only way to have a friend is to be one.”⁸ For figurative elaboration: “The history of persecution is a history of the endeavors to cheat nature, to make water run up hill, to twist a rope of sand.”⁹ Small wonder that language like this cast a spell over Emerson’s contemporaries.

For Emerson extempore speech was always difficult. But that his manuscript did not, necessarily, hamper him seriously appears plain from the following passage by Lowell, which passage may also serve as the final word of Emerson’s contemporaries on his genius as a lecturer: “I have heard some great speakers and some accomplished orators, but never any that so moved and persuaded men as he. There is a kind of undertow in that rich baritone of his that sweeps our minds from their foothold into deeper waters with a drift we cannot and would not resist. And how artfully (for Emerson is a long-studied artist in these things) does the deliberate utterance, that seems waiting for the fit word, appear to admit us partners in the labor of thought and make us feel as if the glance of humor were a sudden suggestion, as if the perfect phrase lying written there on the desk were as unexpected to him as to us! In that closely-filed speech of his at the Burns centenary dinner, every word seemed to have just dropped down to him from the clouds. He looked far away over the heads of his hearers, with a vague kind of expectation,

¹ *Ralph Waldo Emerson*, p. 403.

² *Journals*, I, xv.

³ *Works*, III, 22.

⁴ *Works*, VIII, 271.

⁵ *Works*, II, 275.

⁶ *Works*, II, 295.

⁷ *Works*, II, 53-4.

⁸ *Works*, II, 212.

⁹ *Works*, II, 119.

as into some private heaven of invention, and the winged period came at last obedient to his spell. 'My dainty Ariel!' he seemed murmuring to himself as he cast down his eyes as if in deprecation of the frenzy of approval and caught another sentence from the Sibylline leaves that lay before him, ambushed behind a dish of fruit and seen only by nearest neighbors. Every sentence brought down the house, as I never saw one brought down before,—and it is not so easy to hit Scotsmen with a sentiment that has no hint of native brogue in it. I watched, for it was an interesting study, how the quick sympathy ran flashing from face to face down the long tables, like an electric spark thrilling as it went, and then exploded in a thunder of plaudits. I watched till tables and faces vanished, for I, too, found myself caught up in the common enthusiasm, and my excited fancy set me under the *bema* listening to him who fulminated over Greece. I can never help applying to him what Ben Jonson said of Bacon: 'There happened in my time one noble speaker, who was full of gravity in his speaking. His language was nobly censorious. No man ever spake more neatly, more pressly, more weightily, or suffered less emptiness, less idleness, in what he uttered. No member of his speech but consisted of his own graces. His hearers could not cough, or look aside from him, without loss. He commanded where he spoke.'"¹

III

Now, what has Emerson to contribute to the study and practice of public speaking? Aside from the two lectures on Eloquence, he has left an abundance of material bearing on the subject in his other lectures, in his essays, and in his *Journals*. Since the last-mentioned source is the fullest, the most intimate, and the least known, it will in large part be made the basis of the following compendium. And Emerson's own practice will also be made to contribute to the whole; for he was preëminently a man who practised what he preached.

Emerson believed that public speaking is a great matter. It is not something unnatural or merely conventional. "On the contrary, what an inextinguishable thirst for *eloquence*, however rude, exists in every breast!"² "The sweetest music is not in the oratorio, but in the

¹ *The Writings in Prose and Poetry*, I, 359-60.

² *Journals*, I, 167.

human voice when it speaks from its instant life tones of tenderness, truth, or courage.”¹ “Go to hear a great orator, to see how presentable truth and right are, and how presentable are common facts.”² “Eloquence washes the ears into which it flows.”³ “One writes on air, if he speaks; but no, he writes on mind more durable than marble, and is like him that begets a son, that is, originates a begetter of nations. The maker of a sentence . . . launches out into the infinite and builds a road into Chaos and old Night, and is followed by those who hear him with something of wild, creative delight.”⁴ “The dear old Plutarch assures me that the lamp of Demosthenes never went out; that King Philip called his orations *soldiers*, and in a moment of enthusiasm . . . exclaimed, ‘Had I been there, I too should have declared war against myself.’”⁵

Eloquence is powerful because it is based on the universal. “Eloquence is the universal speech.”⁶ “A contrast is seen in the effect of eloquence, the power which one man in an age possesses of uniting men by addressing the common soul of them all.”⁷ “Trust your nature, the common mind; fear not to sound its depths, to ejaculate its grander emotions. Fear not how men shall take it. See you not they are following your thought and emotion because it leads them deeper into their own? I see with joy I am speaking their word, fulfilling their nature, when I thought the word and nature most my own.”⁸ “Whatever I say that is good on the Sundays, I speak with fervour and authority,—surely not feeling that it rests on my word, or has only the warrant of my faulty character, but that I got it from a deeper and common source, and it is as much addressed to me as to those I speak to.”⁹ “In perfect eloquence, the hearer would lose the sense of dualism, of hearing from another; would cease to distinguish between the orator and himself; would have the sense only of high activity and progress.”¹⁰

And the appeal of the orator is wide, reaching even into the future. “Address your rede to the young American, and know that

¹ *Works*, II, 365.

² *Journals*, VI, 521.

³ *Journals*, IV, 265.

⁴ *Journals*, III, 395.

⁵ *Journals*, III, 386-7.

⁶ *Journals*, II, 324.

⁷ *Works*, VII, 370.

⁸ *Journals*, IV, 211.

⁹ *Journals*, II, 515.

¹⁰ *Journals*, V, 21.

you hook to you all like minds far and near, whether you shall know them or not.”¹ “Another thing: a man that can speak well belongs to the new era as well as to the old.”²

To be successful in public speaking one must feel the spur of a worthy cause. “The only friend that can persuade the soul to speak is a good and great cause.”³ “Literary accomplishments, skill in grammar, logic and rhetoric can never countervail the want of things that demand voice.”⁴ “I have seen the adoption of a principle transform a proser into an orator.”⁵

It is necessary to have convictions. “The most prodigious genius, a seraph’s eloquence, will shamefully defeat its own end if it has not first won the defender to the cause he defends.”⁶ “Nothing can compensate for want of belief; no accomplishments, no talents.”⁷ “That which we do not believe we cannot adequately say, though we may repeat the words never so often.”⁸ “*Yet if you have not faith in you, how can I have faith in you?*”⁹ “The eloquent man is he who is no beautiful speaker, but who is inwardly and desperately drunk with a certain belief.”¹⁰ “To believe your own thought, that is Genius.”¹¹

Emotion and inspiration are also indispensable. “Eloquence wants anthracite coal. Coldness is the most fatal quality.”¹² “A preacher should be a live coal to kindle all the church.”¹³ “I will agitate men, being agitated myself.”¹⁴ “A word warm from the heart, *that* enriches me.”¹⁵ “But only then is the orator successful when he himself is agitated, and is as much a hearer as any of the assembly.”¹⁶ “Also, I believe that nothing can be done except by inspiration.”¹⁷ “Every great and commanding moment in the annals

¹ *Journals*, III, 481.

² *Journals*, IV, 461.

³ *Journals*, II, 509.

⁴ *Journals*, V, 334.

⁵ *Journals*, III, 516.

⁶ *Journals*, I, 363-4.

⁷ *Journals*, III, 374.

⁸ *Works*, II, 157.

⁹ *Journals*, V, 494.

¹⁰ *Journals*, VII, 105.

¹¹ *Journals*, IV, 55.

¹² *Journals*, VII, 152.

¹³ *Journals*, IV, 170.

¹⁴ J. E. Cabot, *A Memoir of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, II, 399.

¹⁵ *Journals*, V, 564.

¹⁶ *Journals*, V, 234.

¹⁷ *Journals*, VIII, 223.

of the world is the triumph of some enthusiasm."¹ That emotion and inspiration were not (and are not) lacking in Emerson himself, is attested by Lowell: "Search for his eloquence in his books and you will perchance miss it, but meanwhile you will find that it has kindled all your thoughts."²

Speak from your inmost soul. "The true preacher can be known by this, that he deals out to the people his life,—life passed through the fire of thought."³ "What we say, however trifling, must have its root in ourselves, or it will not move others."⁴ "Sincerity is always holy and always strong."⁵ "I am to try the magic of sincerity, that luxury permitted only to kings and poets."⁶ "The secret of eloquence is to realize all you say. Do not give us counters of base coin, but every word a real value."⁷ "Nothing bizarre, nothing whimsical will endure. Nature is ever interfering with Art."⁸ "It is of no use to preach to me from without."⁹ "The young preacher preached from his ears and his memory, and never a word from his soul. His sermon was loud and hollow."¹⁰ "He weakens who means to confirm his speech by vehemence, feminine vehemence."¹¹ "Forever more let him say what he thinks, instead of being a brute echo, as Webster is Webster in passing conversation."¹² "When I attended church on the other half of a Sunday, and the image in the pulpit was all clay, and not tunable metal, I said to myself that if men would avoid that general language and general manner in which they strive to hide all that is peculiar, and would say only what was uppermost in their own minds, after their own individual manner, every man would be interesting."¹³ "Eloquence is the art of speaking what you mean and are."¹⁴

The moral sentiment is very important. "*Bonus orator, bonus vir.*"¹⁵ "True elevation which nothing can bring down is that of

¹ *Works*, I, 251.

² *The Complete Works* (Fireside Edition), Boston, 1910, I, 351.

³ *Works*, X, 216.

⁴ *Journals*, II, 505.

⁵ *Journals*, II, 362.

⁶ J. E. Cabot, *A Memoir of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, II, 398.

⁷ *Journals*, VIII, 138.

⁸ *Journals*, IV, 56.

⁹ *Works*, II, 287.

¹⁰ *Journals*, IV, 300.

¹¹ *Journals*, III, 484.

¹² *Journals*, IV, 437.

¹³ J. E. Cabot, *A Memoir of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, I, 133.

¹⁴ *Journals*, IX, 342.

¹⁵ *Journals*, II, 488.

moral sentiment.”¹ “I told them that a preacher should be a poet smit with the love of the harmonies of moral nature.”² “It is in the nature of things that the highest originality must be moral.”³ “Milton, Burke, and Webster get most of their wisdom from the heart.”⁴ “In Plutarch’s *Life of Demosthenes* it is quoted from the philosopher that through all his orations runs one idea, that Virtue secures its own success.”⁵ Burroughs has written: “Emerson is the knight errant of the moral sentiment.”⁶

Emerson’s own practice emphasized idealism and optimism. “I only aim to speak for the great soul; to speak for the sovereignty of Ideas.”⁷ “I am to celebrate the spiritual powers, in their infinite contrast to the mechanical powers and the mechanical philosophy of the time. I am to console the brave sufferers under evils whose end they cannot see, by appeals to the great Optimism self-affirmed in all bosoms.”⁸ “If there be power in good intention, in fidelity, and in toil, the north wind shall be purer, the stars in heaven shall glow with a kindlier beam, that I have lived. I am primarily engaged to myself to be a public servant of all the gods, to demonstrate to all men that there is intelligence and good will at the heart of things.”⁹ Matthew Arnold has fittingly said of Emerson: “He is the friend and aider of those who would live in the spirit.”¹⁰

Personality and character are essentials. Emerson quotes the following sentence from Jones Very with approval: “Use what language you will, you can never say anything but what you are.”¹¹ “It makes a great difference as to the force of any sentence whether there be a man behind it or no.”¹² “Talent without character is friskiness.”¹³ “I like to see a man or a woman who does not palter or dodge, whose eyes look straight forward, and who throws the wisdom he or she has attained into the address and demeanor.”¹⁴ “Buck-

¹ *Journals*, III, 188.

² *Works*, I, 421.

³ *Journals*, V, 334.

⁴ *Journals*, II, 362.

⁵ *Journals*, VI, 45.

⁶ *Birds and Poets*, Boston, 1895, p. 181.

⁷ *Journals*, IV, 32.

⁸ J. E. Cabot, *A Memoir of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, II, 398.

⁹ *Works*, I, 324.

¹⁰ *Discourses in America*, London, 1885, p. 179.

¹¹ *Journals*, VI, 132.

¹² *Journals*, V, 430.

¹³ *Journals*, V, 419.

¹⁴ *Journals*, V, 442.

minster went into his pulpit on days of deepest affliction in his parish for the loss of excellent persons, with an alacrity and cheerfulness in his countenance that would have been revolting levity in another man, and read psalms and scriptures of praise. Yet no one was offended, but all felt that the intensity of his emotion was such, and the principle on which it was founded was such, as to overmaster their private thoughts, and the mourner was carried away by the infection of his sublime joy, from the consideration of his petty griefs." ¹ "When Chatham leads the debate, men may well listen, because they must listen." ² "I have read that those who listened to Lord Chatham felt that there was something finer in the man than anything which he said." ³ "Mr. Webster had a natural ascendancy of aspect and carriage which distinguished him over all his contemporaries. His countenance, his figure, and his manners were all in so grand a style, that he was, without effort, as superior to his most eminent rivals as they were to the humblest; so that his arrival in any place was an event which drew crowds of people, who went to satisfy their eyes, and could not see him enough." ⁴ As regards Emerson himself, Burroughs says: "The flavor of character is over all; the features of the man are stamped upon every word." ⁵

An orator should have natural dignity. "Let not a man guard his dignity, but let his dignity guard him." ⁶ "*Potentissimus est qui se habet in potestate* (Seneca)." ⁷ "Calmness is always Godlike." ⁸ "All that frees Talent without increasing self-command is noxious." ⁹ "Character is that reserved force which acts only by *Presence*, and not by visible or analyzable methods." ¹⁰ "Wendell Phillips gives no intimation of his perfect eloquence in casual intercourse. How easily he wears his power, quite free and disengaged, nowise absorbed in any care or thought of the thunderbolt he carries concealed. I think he has more culture than his own, is debtor to generations of gentlemen behind him." ¹¹ "There was Webster, the great cannon

¹ *Journals*, II, 304-5.

² *Works*, I, 207.

³ *Works*, III, 89.

⁴ *Works*, XI, 221.

⁵ *Indoor Studies*, Boston, 1895, p. 149.

⁶ *Journals*, IV, 16.

⁷ *Journals*, II, 508.

⁸ *Journals*, V, 490.

⁹ *Journals*, IV, 34.

¹⁰ *Journals*, VI, 43.

¹¹ *Journals*, IX, 455.

loaded to the lips. . . . The natural grandeur of his face and manners always satisfies; easily great; there is no strut in his voice or behavior, as in the others."¹

Reserve power is closely allied to dignity, and is equally necessary. "Beecher at Exeter Hall is superb:—his consciousness of power shown in his jocular good humour and entire presence of mind; the instant surrender of the English audience, as soon as they found their master; he steers the Behemoth,—sits astride his very snout, strokes his fur, tickles his ear, and rules him; secures the English by the method of circumstantiality of statement which they love, by figures, and then by downright homely illustration of important statements."² "Webster in his speech does but half engage himself."³ "But I think Phillips is entirely resolved into his talent. There is not an immense residuum left as in Webster."⁴

Without losing "touch," one must speak from a higher level. "You must speak always from higher ground. Webster does."⁵ As regards Emerson himself, his son says: "Emerson honored his hearers, however humble, by not 'coming down to them,' but reached them by his assuming their virtue, and speaking to the 'common soul' in them."⁶

Knowledge and intellectual power are necessary. "Knowledge is the only elegance."⁷ "Strong thinking makes strong language; correct thinking, correct speech."⁸ And yet, "In this world, if a man sits down to think, he is immediately asked if he has the headache."⁹ "Do, dear, when you come to write Lyceum lectures, remember that you are not to say, What must be said in a Lyceum? but, What discoveries or stimulating thoughts have I to impart to a thousand persons? not what they will expect to hear, but what is fit for me to say."¹⁰ "He only is a good writer who keeps but one eye on his page, and with the other sweeps over things; so that every sentence brings us a new contribution of observation."¹¹ "The manner of

¹ *Journals*, VII, 87.

² *Journals*, IX, 570.

³ *Journals*, IV, 224.

⁴ *Journals*, IX, 455.

⁵ *Journals*, VII, 152.

⁶ *Works*, II, 429.

⁷ *Journals*, IX, 63.

⁸ *Journals*, II, 522.

⁹ *Journals*, III, 207.

¹⁰ *Journals*, III, 409.

¹¹ *Journals*, IV, 33-4.

using language is surely the most decisive test of intellectual power, and he who has intellectual force of any kind will be sure to show it there.”¹ “I had observed long since that, to give the thought a just and full expression, I must not prematurely utter it.”² “I will say at public lectures, and the like, those things which I have meditated for their own sake, and not for the first time with a view to that occasion. If, otherwise, you select a new subject, and labor to make a good appearance on the appointed day, it is so much lost time to you, and lost time to your hearers.”³ S. M. Crothers says, using the well-known phrase from “The American Scholar”: “Emerson was a man thinking.”⁴

The orator should speak things, not words. “At church today I felt how unequal is the match of words against things. Cease, O thou unauthorized talker, to prate of consolation, and resignation, and spiritual joys in neat and balanced sentences. For I know these men who sit below and on hearing of these *words* look up. Hush quickly! for care and calamity are *things* to them. . . . O speak things then, or hold thy tongue.”⁵ “In good writing, words become one with things.”⁶ “I wish that Webster and Everett and also the young political aspirants of Massachusetts should hear Wendell Phillips speak, were it only for the capital lesson in eloquence they might learn of him. This, namely, that the first and the second and the third part of the art is, to keep your feet always firm on a fact.”⁷ Concerning Emerson himself, Cabot says: “Study, with him, was mainly the study of expression; not the rounding of periods, but the effort to reproduce the impression precisely as it was received. . . . His chief, one may almost say his sole, aim was to write in close contact with life and reality.”⁸ Says Burroughs: “Emerson loves facts, things, objects, as the workman his tools.”⁹

For Emerson, as for Flaubert, there is a right word, and no other will do. “No man can write well who thinks there is any choice of words for him. The laws of composition are as strict as those of sculpture and architecture. . . . So in writing, there is always a right

¹ *Journals*, II, 449.

² *Journals*, III, 273.

³ *Journals*, III, 361.

⁴ *Ralph Waldo Emerson*, Indianapolis, 1921, p. 11.

⁵ *Works*, VII, 372.

⁶ *Journals*, II, 401.

⁷ *Journals*, VI, 542.

⁸ *A Memoir of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, I, 293.

⁹ *Birds and Poets*, p. 164.

word, and every other than that is wrong. There is no beauty in words except in their collocation. The effect of a fanciful word misplaced, is like that of a horn of exquisite polish growing on a human head."¹ "It is a rule of Rhetoric, always to have an eye to the primary sense of the words we use."² "In your Rhetoric, notice that only once or twice in history can the words 'dire' and 'tremendous' fit."³ "Don't affect the use of an adverb or an epithet more than belongs to the feeling you have."⁴ "I have been making war against the superlative degree in the rhetoric of my fair visitor."⁵ Holmes says of Emerson: "He was apt to hesitate in the course of a sentence, so as to be sure of the exact word he wanted; picking his way through his vocabulary, to get at the best expression of his thought, as a well-dressed woman crosses the muddy pavement."⁶

One's diction should be strong, simple, concise, and imaginative. "He can toil terribly," said Cecil of Sir Walter Raleigh. Is there any sermon on Industry that will exhort me like these few words? These sting and bite and kick me. I will get out of the way of their blows by making them true of myself."⁷ "The language of the street is always strong. What can describe the folly and emptiness of scolding like the word *jawing*? . . . And I confess to some pleasure from the stinging rhetoric of a rattling oath in the mouth of truckmen and teamsters. . . . Cut these words and they bleed; they are vascular and alive; they walk and run."⁸ "Cannot the stinging dialect of the sailors be domesticated? It is the best rhetoric, and for a hundred occasions those forbidden words are the only good ones."⁹ "What argument, what eloquence can avail against the power of that one word *niggers*? The man of the world annihilates the whole combined force of all the anti-slavery societies of the world by pronouncing it."¹⁰ "Classifying words outvalue many arguments; upstart, cockney, granny, pedant, prig, precisian, rowdy, niggers."¹¹ "Language is made up of the spoils of all actions, trades,

¹ *Journals*, II, 401.

² *Journals*, IV, 23.

³ *Journals*, III, 484.

⁴ *Journals*, II, 427.

⁵ *Journals*, IV, 162.

⁶ *Ralph Waldo Emerson*, pp. 363-4.

⁷ *Journals*, V, 460.

⁸ *Journals*, V, 419-20.

⁹ *Journals*, V, 484.

¹⁰ *Journals*, VII, 38.

¹¹ *Journals*, VI, 514.

arts, games, of men. Every word is a metaphor borrowed from some natural or mechanical, agricultural or nautical process.”¹ “Burke’s imagery is, much of it, got from books, and so is a secondary formation. Webster’s is all primary. Let a man make the woods and fields his books; then at the hour of passion his thoughts will invest themselves spontaneously with natural imagery.”² “Give me initiative, spermatie, prophesying, man-making words.”³ Concerning Emerson’s own remarkable diction, W. C. Brownell writes the following: “His vocabulary is a marvel of eclecticism—drawn from all fields, from poetry to science, from the country of the imagination to that of every day existence, ranging from the most exotic to the most familiar, the most ornate to the most ordinary, and excluding nothing but the pedantic and the mediocre.”⁴

Our speech should have compression, relevancy, and concreteness. “Spartans, stoics, heroes, saints and gods use a short and positive speech. They are never off their centres. As soon as they swell and paint and find truth not enough for them, softening of the brain has already begun.”⁵ “The Spartan is respectable and strong who speaks what must be spoken; but these gay Athenians that go up and down the world making all talk a Recitation, talking for display, disgust.”⁶ “Look at the orations of Demosthenes and Burke, and how many irrelevant things, sentences, words, letters, are there? Not one.”⁷ “I cannot hear a sermon without being struck by the fact that amid drowsy series of sentences what a sensation a historical fact, a biographical name, a sharply objective illustration makes!”⁸

Language should be classic. “What is the classic? Classic art is the art of necessity; organic; modern or romantic bears the stamp of caprice or chance. One is the product of inclination, of caprice, of haphazard; the other carries its law and necessity within itself. . . . The classic unfolds, the romantic adds. The classic *should*, the modern *would*. The classic is healthy, the romantic is sick.”⁹

The orator’s style should have an element of beauty. “Whatever

¹ *Journals*, V, 213.

² *Journals*, III, 567.

³ *Journals*, VI, 133.

⁴ *American Prose Masters*, New York, 1909, 181-2.

⁵ *Works*, X, 169.

⁶ *Journals*, IV, 5.

⁷ *Journals*, III, 549.

⁸ *Journals*, IV, 169.

⁹ *Works*, XII, 303-4.

is dreary and repels is not power but the lack of power.”¹ “Fault of Theodore Parker, that there was no beauty. What he said as mere fact almost offended you, so bald and detached.”² “I think now that the very finest and sweetest closes and falls are not in our metres, but in the measures of eloquence, which have greater variety and richness than verse.”³ “Burke is a rhetoric, a robe to be always admired for the beauty with which he drapes facts, as we love light, or rather colour, which clothes all things. What rich temperance, what costly textures, what flowing variety!”⁴ But this attractiveness should not be weak: “Dr. Osgood said of P’s sermon that it was patty cake.”⁵ On the contrary, Emerson could find attractiveness even in the rugged speech of men like Garrison and the sailor preacher, “Father” Taylor. “Garrison is a virile speaker; he lacks the feminine element which we find in men of genius. He has great body to his discourse, so that he can well afford occasional flourishes and eloquence. He is a man in his place. He brings his whole history with him, wherever he goes, and there is no falsehood or patchwork, but sincerity and unity.”⁶ “Edward Taylor came last night and gave us in the old church a Lecture on Temperance. A wonderful man; I had almost said, a perfect orator. The utter want and loss of all method, the ridicule of all method, the bright chaos come again of his bewildering oratory, certainly bereaves it of power,—but what splendor! what sweetness! what richness! what depth! what cheer! How he conciliates, how he humanizes! how he exhilarates and ennobles! Beautiful philanthropist! Godly poet! the Shakespeare of the sailor and the poor. God has found one harp of divine melody to ring and sigh sweet music amidst caves and cellars.”⁷ To what an extent the element of beauty may be present in Emerson’s own speech, can be made apparent by the following passage from his oration “The Method of Nature”: “How silent, how spacious, what room for all, yet without place to insert an atom;—in graceful succession, in equal fitness, in balanced beauty, the dance of the hours goes forward still. Like an odor of incense, like a strain of music, like a sleep, it is inexact and boundless. It

¹ *Journals*, IX, 342.

² *Journals*, IX, 272.

³ *Journals*, VI, 75.

⁴ *Journals*, V, 243-4.

⁵ *Journals*, VI, 45.

⁶ *Journals*, VII, 97.

⁷ *Journals*, IV, 191.

will not be dissected, nor unravelled, nor shown. Away, profane philosopher! seekest thou in nature the cause? This refers to that, and that to the next, and the next to the third, and everything refers. Thou must ask in another mood, thou must feel it and love it, thou must behold it in a spirit as grand as that by which it exists, ere thou canst know the law. Known it will not be, but gladly beloved and enjoyed."¹

The matter of structure is also of the first importance. "I see these truths chiefly in that architecture which I study and practice, namely, Rhetoric, or the Building of Discourse. Profoundest thoughts, sublime images, dazzling figures are squandered and lost in an immethodical harangue. We are fatigued, and glad when it is done. . . . But let the same number of thoughts be dealt with by a natural rhetoric, let the question be asked—What is said? How many things? Which are they? Count and number them: put together those that belong together. Now say *what your subject is*, for now first you know: and now state your inference or peroration in what calm or inflammatory temper you must, and behold! out of the quarry you have erected a temple, soaring in due gradation, turret over tower, to heaven, cheerful with thorough-lights, majestic with strength, desired of all eyes."² Owing to his epigrammatic quality and his almost total lack of connectives and transitions, hasty critics are wont to adjudge Emerson himself as wanting in coherence. That the sentence, as a unit of thought and feeling, meant exceedingly much to him can hardly be questioned; but this does not necessarily imply that he is lacking in sequence and unity of tone. In his elaborate and discriminating study of Emerson, Professor O. W. Firkins sums up what seems to be the truth of the matter: "While due allowance, therefore, should be made for Emerson's reluctance to advertise—or even sometimes to announce—the articulation of successive sentences, it is time surely to bury the legend that he worked in pellicles, that his composition is a fall of snowflakes. The whole fascination of life for him lay in the disclosure of identity in variety, that is, in the concurrence, the *running together*, of several distinct images or ideas. It would be suggestive, and not wholly inaccurate, to aver that he *thought in paragraphs*."³ And says W. C. Brownell: "No writer ever had in more opulent measure the uni-

¹ *Works*, I, 200.

² *Journals*, IV, 336.

³ *Ralph Waldo Emerson*, Boston, 1915, p. 237.

versal power of maintaining throughout varied thematic modulation a single tone, a central thought, until the expression of its strict implications was complete, and one after another of its phrasings apt for echo in eloquent unison.”¹

Voice and gesture are for Emerson very largely matters of personality, and therefore receive comparatively little separate comment. They are not, however, entirely ignored. “The lower tone you take, the more flexible your voice is.”² “Eloquence, as far as it is a fine art, is modified how much by the material organization of the orator, the tone of the voice, the physical strength, the play of the eye and countenance.”³

Both extempore and written speeches may be acceptable. “Ex-tempore speaking can be good, and written discourses can be good. A tent is a good thing, but so is a cathedral.”⁴ “How trifling to insist on *ex tempore* speech, or spontaneous conversation, and decry the written poem or dissertation, or the debating club. A man’s deep conviction lies too far down in nature to be much affected by these trifles. Do what we can, your genius will speak from you, and mine from me.”⁵ And yet, Emerson sometimes felt the limitations of being dependent on a manuscript. “When I address a large assembly, as last Wednesday, I am always apprised what an opportunity is there: not for reading to them, as I do, lively miscellanies, but for painting in fire my thought, and being agitated to agitate. One must dedicate himself to it and think with his audience in his mind, so as to keep the perspective and symmetry of the oration, and enter into all the easily forgotten secrets of a great nocturnal assembly and their relation to the speaker.”⁶ But whether written or not, the speech must be in the oral style. “’Tis the worst praise you can give a speech that it is as if written.”⁷ No student of Emerson can fail to notice that his own style is prevailingly oral. Says Professor Bliss Perry: “The oral method thus predominates: a series of oracular thoughts has been shaped for oratorical utterance, not oratorical in the bombastic, popular American sense, but cunningly designed, by a master of rhetoric, to capture the ear and then the

¹ *American Prose Masters*, p. 183.

² *Journals*, III, 303.

³ *Works*, VII, 44.

⁴ *Journals*, V, 236.

⁵ *Journals*, V, 257-8.

⁶ *Journals*, VI, 492-3.

⁷ *Works*, XII, 292.

mind of the auditor.”¹ And W. C. Brownell speaks to the same effect: “At all events in Emerson’s case, his early ideals and his subsequent practice in the lyceum pulpit, are undoubtedly largely responsible for what is the salient merit of his style—for the fact that what he wrote has the vitality of the spoken word.”² Again: “Eloquence, in fact, either of word, phrase or passage, pervades his style as a flavor; it is present as a distinct, and, indeed, dominant element and governs the entire technic, already germinant in its inspiration.”³

Stump oratory also has a legitimate place. “It is of great worth, this stump-oratory (though much decried by Carlyle and others), and very rare. There have been millions and millions of men, and a good stump-orator only once in an age. There have been but a few since history began; Demosthenes and Chatham and Daniel Webster and Cobden,—and yet all the human race are competitors in the art. Of course the writers prefer their own art. Stump-oratory requires presence of mind, heat, spunk, continuity, humanity.”⁴

Emerson was a close student of audiences. After attending the New York Caucus, he writes: “There is, however, great unity in the audience. What pleases the audience *very much*, pleases every individual in it. What tires me, tires all.”⁵ Concerning the difference between conversing in private and addressing an audience he says: “The man that just now chatted at your side of trifles, rises in the assembly to speak, and speaks to them collectively in a tone and with a series of thoughts he would never think of assuming to any one of them alone. Because man’s universal nature is his inmost nature.”⁶ Emerson would observe the effect his lectures produced, and would change them from time to time, so as to adapt them to his audience. “When I tell a country Lyceum committee that I will read a new lecture, they are pleased—poor men! They do not know that ‘the barber learns his trade on the orphan’s chin.’ By the time that lecture, after long trying on, is given in New York or Philadelphia, it will be a very different matter.”⁷

In addressing an audience, directness or communicativeness is necessary. Dr. Emerson says: “When Mr. Emerson, a young divin-

¹ *The American Spirit in Literature*, New Haven, 1920, p. 126.

² *American Prose Masters*, p. 181.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 183.

⁴ *Works*, VIII, 384.

⁵ *Journals*, III, 350.

⁶ *Journals*, III, 495.

⁷ *Journals*, VIII, 94.

ity student, was writing his first sermon, he thus cautioned himself: 'Take care that your sermon is not a recitation; that it is a sermon to Mr. A and Mr. B and Mr. C.'"¹ We may suspect that Emerson was glad to be able to make the following entry in his diary: "Somebody said of me after the lecture at Amory Hall, within hearing of A. W., 'The secret of his popularity is, that he has a *damn* for everybody.'"²

Emerson had faith in the average intelligence of audiences. "Don't you deceive yourself, say I, the great mass understand what's what, as well as the little mass."³ "Nothing is more melancholy than to treat men as pawns and ninepins. If I leave out their heart, they take out mine. But speak to the soul, and always the soul will reply."⁴ "Truth is never crammed down your throat, but is to be understood."⁵ "And eloquence is the power to translate truth into language intelligible to the persons to whom you speak."⁶

Do not say too much. "More is understood than is expressed in the most diffuse discourse. It is the unsaid part of every lecture that does the most good."⁷ "If you desire to arrest attention, to surprise, do not give me facts in the order of cause and effect, but drop one or two links in the chain, and give me with a cause, an effect two or three times removed."⁸ "The good rain, like a bad preacher, does not know when to leave off."⁹ "The silences, pauses, of an orator are as telling as his words."¹⁰ "I have known a pause in speech do more than a harangue."¹¹

Speak the affirmative. "Omit all the negative propositions."¹² "An affirmative talent is always safe. The critics may do their worst; it is victory."¹³ "Though your views are in straight antagonism to theirs, assume an identity of sentiment, assume that you are saying precisely that which all think, and in the flow of wit and love roll out your paradoxes in solid column, with not the infirmity of a

¹ *Works*, VII, 371-2.

² *Journals*, VI, 497.

³ *Journals*, IV, 143.

⁴ *Journals*, IV, 172.

⁵ *Journals*, II, 421.

⁶ *Journals*, VIII, 313.

⁷ *Journals*, II, 444.

⁸ *Journals*, V, 63-4.

⁹ *Journals*, III, 282.

¹⁰ *Works*, XII, 290.

¹¹ *Journals*, II, 243.

¹² *Journals*, IX, 85.

¹³ *Journals*, VIII, 69.

doubt. So at least shall you get an adequate deliverance. . . . But assume a consent and it shall be granted, since really and underneath their external diversities, all men are of one heart and mind.”¹ “Speak the affirmative; emphasize your choice by utter ignoring of all that you reject; seeing that opinions are temporary, but convictions uniform and eternal,—seeing that a sentiment never loses pathos or persuasion, but is youthful after a thousand years.”²

Aim to create in your hearer independence of mind rather than dependence. “I have been writing and speaking what were once called novelties, for twenty-five or thirty years, and have not now one disciple. Why? Not that what I said was not true; not that it has not found intelligent receivers; but because it did not go from any wish in me to bring men to me, but to themselves. I delight in driving them from me. What could I do if they came to me?—they would interrupt and encumber me. This is my boast that I have no school follower. I should account it a measure of the impurity of insight, if it did not create independence.”³

Take the occasion into account. “In eloquence, the great triumphs of the art are when the orator is lifted above himself; when consciously he makes himself the mere tongue of the occasion and the hour, and says what cannot but be said. Hence the term *abandonment*, to describe the self-surrender of the orator. Not his will, but the principle on which he is horsed, the great connection and crisis of events, thunder in the ear of the crowd.”⁴ “I remember his appearance at Bunker’s Hill. There was the Monument, and here was Webster. He knew that a little more or less of rhetoric signified nothing: he was only to say plain things and equal things,—grand things if he had them, and, if he had them not, only to abstain from saying unfit things,—and the whole occasion was answered by his presence. It was a place for behavior more than for speech, and Mr. Webster walked through his part with entire success.”⁵

Practice what you preach. “The argument which has not power to reach my own practice, I may well fear has not power to reach yours.”⁶ “The only speech will at last be action.”⁷

¹ *Works*, II, 239.

² *Works*, X, 235.

³ *Journals*, IX, 188-9.

⁴ *Works*, VII, 49.

⁵ *Works*, XI, 221.

⁶ *Journals*, II, 308.

⁷ J. E. Cabot, *A Memoir of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, II, 392.

Remember that the career of orator requires long preparation. "The orator is nowise equal to the evoking on a new substance of this brilliant chain of sentiments, facts, illustrations, whereby he now fires himself and you. Every link in this living chain he found separate; one, ten years ago; one, last week; some of them he found in his father's house, or at school when a boy; some of them by his losses; some of them by his sickness; some by his sins. The Webster with whom you talk admires the oration almost as much as you do, and knows himself to be nowise equal, unarmed, that is, without the tool of Synthesis, to the splendid effect which he is yet well pleased you should impute to him."¹ "I pitied—for his ill speaking, until I found him not at all disheartened, not at all curious concerning the effect of his speech, but eager to speak again, and speak better on a new matter. Then I see him destined to move society."²

Do not expect to be always understood or appreciated. "It is a luxury to be understood."³ "Those who live to the future must always appear selfish to those who live to the present."⁴ "Man was made for conflict, not for rest."⁵ "The true and finished man is ever alone."⁶ "Magnanimity consists in scorning circumstance."⁷ "God is not in a hurry."⁸

As Emerson found most of his ideals of public speaking embodied in Webster, this account may fittingly end with the following tribute: "His excellent organization, the perfection of his elocution and all that thereto belongs,—voice, accent, intonation, attitude, manner,—we shall not soon find again. Then he was so thoroughly simple and wise in his rhetoric; he saw through his matter, hugged his fact so close, went to the principle or essential, and never indulged in a weak flourish, though he knew perfectly well how to make such exordiums, episodes and perorations as might give perspective to his harangues without in the least embarrassing his march or confounding his transitions. In his statements things lay in daylight; we saw them in order as they were. Though he knew very well how to present his own personal claims, yet in his argument he

¹ *Journals*, III, 478.

² *Journals*, IV, 25.

³ *Journals*, II, 368.

⁴ *Works*, III, 103.

⁵ *Works*, XII, 60.

⁶ *Journals*, III, 322.

⁷ *Journals*, IV, 26.

⁸ *Journals*, II, 427.

was intellectual,—stated his fact pure of all personality, so that his splendid wrath, when his eyes became lamps, was the wrath of the fact and the cause he stood for.”¹

¹*Works*, XI, 221-2.

THE LITERARY CRITICISM OF ORATORY

HERBERT A. WICHELNS

I

SAMUEL JOHNSON once projected a history of criticism "as it relates to judging of authors." Had the great eighteenth-century critic ever carried out his intention, he would have included some interesting comments on the orators and their judges. Histories of criticism, in whole or in part, we now have, and histories of orators. But that section of the history of criticism which deals with judging of orators is still unwritten. Yet the problem is an interesting one, and one which involves some important conceptions. Oratory—the waning influence of which is often discussed in current periodicals—has definitely lost the established place in literature that it once had. Demosthenes and Cicero, Bossuet and Burke, all hold their places in literary histories. But Webster inspires more than one modern critic to ponder the question whether oratory is literature; and if we may judge by the emphasis of literary historians generally, both in England and in America, oratory is either an outcast or a poor relation. What are the reasons for this change? It is a question not easily answered. Involved in it is some shift in the conception of oratory or of literature, or of both; nor can these conceptions have changed except in response to the life of which oratory, as well as literature, is part.

This essay, it should be said, is merely an attempt to spy out the land, to see what some critics have said of some orators, to discover what their mode of criticism has been. The discussion is limited in the main to Burke and a few nineteenth-century figures—Webster, Lincoln, Gladstone, Bright, Cobden—and to the verdicts on these found in the surveys of literary history, in critical essays, in histories of oratory, and in biographies.

Of course, we are not here concerned with the disparagement of oratory. With that, John Morley once dealt in a phrase: "Yet,

after all, to disparage eloquence is to depreciate mankind.”¹ Nor is the praise of eloquence of moment here. What interests us is the method of the critic: his standards, his categories of judgment, what he regards as important. These will show, not so much what he thinks of a great and ancient literary type, as how he thinks in dealing with that type. The chief aim is to know how critics have spoken of orators.

We have not much serious criticism of oratory. The reasons are patent. Oratory is intimately associated with statecraft; it is bound up with the things of the moment; its occasion, its terms, its background, can often be understood only by the careful student of history. Again, the publication of orations as pamphlets leaves us free to regard any speech merely as an essay, as a literary effort deposited at the shrine of the muses in hope of being blessed with immortality. This view is encouraged by the difficulty of reconstructing the conditions under which the speech was delivered; by the doubt, often, whether the printed text of the speech represents what was actually said, or what the orator elaborated afterwards. Burke’s corrections are said to have been the despair of his printers.² Some of Chatham’s speeches, by a paradox of fate, have been reported to us by Samuel Johnson, whose style is as remote as possible from that of the Great Commoner, and who wrote without even having heard the speeches pronounced.³ Only in comparatively recent times has parliamentary reporting pretended to give full records of what was actually said; and even now speeches are published for literary or political purposes which justify the corrector’s pencil in changes both great and small. Under such conditions the historical study of speech making is far from easy.

Yet the conditions of democracy necessitate both the making of speeches and the study of the art. It is true that other ways of influencing opinion have long been practised, that oratory is no longer the chief means of communicating ideas to the masses. And the change is emphasized by the fact that the newer methods are now beginning to be investigated, sometimes from the point of view of the political student, sometimes from that of the “publicity expert.” But, human nature being what it is, there is no likelihood that face

¹ *Life of William Ewart Gladstone*, New York, 1903, II, 593.

² *Select Works*, ed. E. J. Payne, Oxford, 1892, I, xxxviii.

³ Basil Williams, *Life of William Pitt*, New York, 1913, II, 335-337.

to face persuasion will cease to be a principal mode of exerting influence, whether in courts, in senate-houses, or on the platform. It follows that the critical study of oratorical method is the study, not of a mode outworn, but of a permanent and important human activity.

Upon the great figures of the past who have used the art of public address, countless judgments have been given. These judgments have varied with the bias and preoccupation of the critics, who have been historians, biographers, or literary men, and have written accordingly. The context in which we find criticism of speeches, we must, for the purposes of this essay at least, both note and set aside. For though the aim of the critic conditions his approach to our more limited problem—the method of dealing with oratory—still we find that an historian may view an orator in the same light as does a biographer or an essayist. The literary form in which criticism of oratory is set does not afford a classification of the critics.

"There are," says a critic of literary critics, "three definite points, on one of which, or all of which, criticism must base itself. There is the date, and the author, and the work."¹ The points on which writers base their judgments of orators do afford a classification. The man, his work, his times, are the necessary common topics of criticism; no one of them can be wholly disregarded by any critic. But mere difference in emphasis on one or another of them is important enough to suggest a rough grouping. The writers with whom this essay deals give but a subordinate position to the date; they are interested chiefly in the man or in his works. Accordingly, we have as the first type of criticism that which is predominantly personal or biographical, is occupied with the character and the mind of the orator, goes behind the work to the man. The second type attempts to hold the scales even between the biographical and the literary interest. The third is occupied with the work and tends to ignore the man. These three classes, then, seem to represent the practice of modern writers in dealing with orators. Each merits a more detailed examination.

II

We may begin with that type of critic whose interest is in personality, who seeks the man behind the work. Critics of this type

¹ D. Nichol Smith, *Functions of Criticism*, Oxford, 1909, p. 15.

furnish forth the appreciative essays and the occasional addresses on the orators. They are as the sands of the sea. Lord Rosebery's two speeches on Burke, Whitelaw Reid's on Lincoln and on Burke, may stand as examples of the character sketch.¹ The second part of Birrell's essay on Burke will serve for the mental character sketch (the first half of the essay is biographical); other examples are Sir Walter Raleigh's essay on Burke and that by Robert Lynd.² All these emphasize the concrete nature of Burke's thought, the realism of his imagination, his peculiar combination of breadth of vision with intensity; they pass to the guiding principles of his thought: his hatred of abstraction, his love of order and of settled ways. But they do not occupy themselves with Burke as a speaker, nor even with him as a writer; their first and their last concern is with the man rather than with his works; and their method is to fuse into a single impression whatever of knowledge or opinion they may have of the orator's life and works. These critics, in dealing with the public speaker, think of him as something other than a speaker. Since this type of writing makes but an indirect contribution to our judgment of the orator, there is no need of a more extended account of the method, except as we find it combined with a discussion of the orator's works.

III

Embedded in biographies and histories of literature, we find another type of criticism, that which combines the sketch of mind and character with some discussion of style. Of the general interest of such essays there can be no doubt. Nine-tenths of so-called literary criticism deals with the lives and personalities of authors, and for the obvious reason, that every one is interested in them, whereas few will follow a technical study, however broadly based. At its best, the type of study that starts with the orator's mind and character is justified by the fact that nothing can better illuminate his work as a persuader of men. But when not at its best, the description of a man's general cast of mind stands utterly unrelated to his art: the critic fails to fuse his comment on the individual with his comment

¹ See Rosebery, *Appreciations and Addresses*, London, 1899, and Whitelaw Reid, *American and English Studies*, New York, 1913, II.

² See Augustine Birrell, *Obiter Dicta*, New York, 1887, II; Walter Raleigh, *Some Authors*, Oxford, 1923; Robert Lynd, *Books and Authors*, London, 1922.

on the artist; and as a result we get some statements about the man, and some statements about the orator, but neither casts light on the other. Almost any of the literary histories will supply examples of the gulf that may yawn between a stylistic study and a study of personality.

The best example of the successful combination of the two strains is Grierson's essay on Burke in the *Cambridge History of English Literature*. In this, Burke's style, though in largest outline only, is seen to emerge from the essential nature of the man. Yet of this essay, too, it must be said that the analysis of the orator is incomplete, being overshadowed by the treatment of Burke as a writer, though, as we shall see, the passages on style have the rare virtue of keeping to the high road of criticism. The majority of critics who use the mixed method, however, do not make their study of personality fruitful for a study of style, do not separate literary style from oratorical style even to the extent that Grierson does, and do conceive of literary style as a matter of details. In fact, most of the critics of this group tend to supply a discussion of style by jotting down what has occurred to them about the author's management of words; and in the main, they notice the lesser strokes of literary art, but not its broader aspects. They have an eye for tactics, but not for strategy. This is the more strange, as these same writers habitually take large views of the orator himself, considered as a personality, and because they often remark the speaker's great themes and his leading ideas. The management of ideas—what the Romans called invention and disposition—the critics do not observe; their practice is the *salto mortale* from the largest to the smallest considerations. And it needs no mention that a critic who does not observe the management of ideas even from the point of view of structure and arrangement can have nothing to say of the adaptation of ideas to the orator's audience.

It is thus with Professor McLaughlin in his chapter in the *Cambridge History of American Literature* on Clay and Calhoun and some lesser lights. The pages are covered with such expressions as diffuse, florid, diction restrained and strong, neatly phrased, power of attack, invective, gracious persuasiveness. Of the structure of the speeches by which Clay and Calhoun exercised their influence—nothing. The drive of ideas is not represented. The background of habitual feeling which the orators at times appealed to and at times

modified, is hinted at in a passage about Clay's awakening the spirit of nationalism, and in another passage contrasting the full-blooded oratory of Benton with the more polished speech of Quincy and Everett; but these are the merest hints. In the main, style for McLaughlin is neither the expression of personality nor the order and movement given to thought, but a thing of shreds and patches. It is thus, too, with Morley's pages on Burke's style in his life of the orator, and with Lodge's treatment of Webster in his life of the great American. A rather better analysis, though on the same plane of detail, may be used as an example. Oliver Elton says of Burke:

He embodies, more powerfully than any one, the mental tendencies and changes that are seen gathering force through the eighteenth century. A volume of positive knowledge, critically sifted and ascertained; a constructive vision of the past and its institutions; the imagination, under this guidance, everywhere at play; all these elements unite in Burke. His main field is political philosophy. . . . His favorite form is oratory, uttered or written. His medium is prose, and the work of his later years, alone, outweighs all contemporary prose in power. . . . His whole body of production has the unity of some large cathedral, whose successive accretions reveal the natural growth of a single mind, without any change or essential break. . . .

Already [in the *Thoughts* and in the *Observations*] the characteristics of Burke's thought and style appear, as well as his profound conversance with constitutional history, finance, and affairs. There is a constant reference to general principles, as in the famous defence of Party. The maxims that come into play go far beyond the occasion. There is a perpetual groundswell of passion, embanked and held in check, but ever breaking out into sombre irony and sometimes into figure; but metaphors and other tropes are not yet very frequent. . . .

In the art of unfolding and amplifying, Burke is the rival of the ancients. . . .

In the speech on Conciliation the [oft-repeated] key-word is peace. . . . This iteration makes us see the stubborn faces on the opposite benches. There is contempt in it; their ears must be dinned, they must remember the word peace through the long intricate survey that is to follow. . . .

Often he has a turn that would have aroused the fervor of the great appreciator known to us by the name of Longinus. In his speech on Economical Reform (1780) Burke risks an appeal, in the face of the Commons, to the example of the enemy. He has described . . . the reforms of the French revenue. He says: "The French have imitated us; let us, through them, imitate ourselves, ourselves in our better and happier days." A speaker who was willing to offend for the sake of startling, and to defeat his purpose, would simply have said, "The French have imitated us; let us imitate them." Burke comes to the verge of this imprudence, but he sees the outcry on the lips of the adversary, and silences them by the word *ourselves*; and then,

seizing the moment of bewilderment, repeats it and explains it by the noble past; he does not say when those days were; the days of Elizabeth or of Cromwell? Let the House choose! This is true oratory, honest diplomacy.¹

Here, in some twenty pages, we have but two hints that Burke had to put his ideas in a form adapted to his audience; only the reiterated *peace* in all Burke's writings reminds the critic of Burke's hearers; only one stroke of tact draws his attention. Most of his account is devoted to Burke's style in the limited use of the term: to his power of amplification—his conduct of the paragraph, his use of clauses now long, now short—to his figures, comparisons, and metaphors, to his management of the sentence pattern, and to his rhythms. For Professor Elton, evidently, Burke was a man, and a mind, and an artist in prose; but he was not an orator. Interest in the minutiae of style has kept Elton from bringing his view of Burke the man to bear on his view of Burke's writings. The fusing point evidently is in the strategic purpose of the works, in their function as speeches. By holding steadily to the conception of Burke as a public man, one could make the analysis of mind and the analysis of art more illuminating for each other than Elton does.

It cannot be said that in all respects Stephenson's chapter on Lincoln in the *Cambridge History of American Literature* is more successful than Elton's treatment of Burke; but it is a better interweaving of the biographical and the literary strands of interest. Stephenson's study of the personality of Lincoln is directly and persistently used in the study of Lincoln's style.

Is it fanciful to find a connection between the way in which his mysticism develops—its atmospheric, non-dogmatic pervasiveness—and the way in which his style develops? Certainly the literary part of him works into all the portions of his utterance with the gradualness of daylight through a shadowy wood. . . . And it is to be noted that the literary quality . . . is of the whole, not of the detail. It does not appear as a gift of phrases. Rather it is the slow unfolding of those two original characteristics, taste and rhythm. What is growing is the degree of both things. The man is becoming deeper, and as he does so he imposes himself, in this atmospheric way, more steadily on his language.²

The psychology of mystical experience may appear a poor support for the study of style. It is but one factor of many, and

¹ Oliver Elton, *Survey of English Literature, 1780-1830*, I, 234-53.

² *Cambridge History of American Literature*, New York, 1921, III, 374-5.

Stephenson may justly be reproached for leaning too heavily upon it. Compared to Grierson's subtler analysis of Burke's mind and art, the essay of Stephenson seems forced and one-sided. Yet he illuminates his subject more than many of the writers so far mentioned, because he begins with a vigorous effort to bring his knowledge of the man to bear upon his interpretation of the work. But though we find in Stephenson's pages a suggestive study of Lincoln as literary man, we find no special regard for Lincoln as orator. The qualities of style that Stephenson mentions are the qualities of prose generally:

At last he has his second manner, a manner quite his own. It is not his final manner, the one that was to give him his assured place in literature. However, in a wonderful blend of simplicity, directness, candor, joined with a clearness beyond praise, and a delightful cadence, it has outstripped every other politician of the hour. And back of its words, subtly affecting its phrases, . . . is that brooding sadness which was to be with him to the end.¹

The final manner, it appears, is a sublimation of the qualities of the earlier, which was "keen, powerful, full of character, melodious, impressive";² and it is a sublimation which has the power to awaken the imagination by its flexibility, directness, pregnancy, wealth.

In this we have nothing new, unless it be the choice of stylistic categories that emphasize the larger pattern of ideas rather than the minute pattern of grammatical units, such as we have found in Elton and to some extent shall find in Saintsbury; it must be granted, too, that Stephenson has dispensed with detail and gained his larger view at the cost of no little vagueness. "Two things," says Stephenson of the Lincoln of 1849-1858, "grew upon him. The first was his understanding of men, the generality of men. . . . The other thing that grew upon him was his power to reach and influence them through words."³ We have here the text for any study of Lincoln as orator; but the study itself this critic does not give us.

Elton's characterization of Burke's style stands out from the usual run of superficial comment by the closeness of its analysis and its regard for the architectonic element. Stephenson's characterization of Lincoln's style is distinguished by a vigorous if forced effort to unite the study of the man and of the work. With both we

¹ *Cambridge History of American Literature*, III, 378.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 381-2.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 377.

may contrast a better essay, by a critic of greater insight. Grierson says of Burke:

What Burke has of the deeper spirit of that movement [the romantic revival] is seen not so much in the poetic imagery of his finest prose as in the philosophical imagination which informs his conception of the state, in virtue of which he transcends the rationalism of the century. . . . This temper of Burke's mind is reflected in his prose. . . . To the direct, conversational prose of Dryden and Swift, changed social circumstances and the influence of Johnson had given a more oratorical cast, more dignity and weight, but, also, more of heaviness and conventional elegance. From the latter faults, Burke is saved by his passionate temperament, his ardent imagination, and the fact that he was a speaker conscious always of his audience. . . . [Burke] could delight, astound, and convince an audience. He did not easily conciliate and win them over. He lacked the first essential and index of the conciliatory speaker, *lenitas vocis*; his voice was harsh and unmusical, his gesture ungainly. . . . And, even in the text of his speeches there is a strain of irony and scorn which is not well fitted to conciliate. . . . We have evidence that he could do both things on which Cicero lays stress—move his audience to tears and delight them by his wit. . . . Yet, neither pathos nor humor is Burke's *forte*. . . . Burke's unique power as an orator lies in the peculiar interpenetration of thought and passion. Like the poet and the prophet, he thinks most profoundly when he thinks most passionately. When he is not deeply moved, his oratory verges toward the turgid; when he indulges feeling for his own sake, as in parts of *Letters on a Regicide Peace*, it becomes hysterical. But, in his greatest speeches and pamphlets, the passion of Burke's mind shows itself in the luminous thoughts which it emits, in the imagery which at once moves *and* teaches, throwing a flood of light not only on the point in question, but on the whole neighboring sphere of man's moral and political nature.¹

The most notable feature of these passages is not their recognition that Burke was a speaker, but their recognition that his being a speaker conditioned his style, and that he is to be judged in part at least as one who attempted to influence men by the spoken word. Grierson, like Elton, attends to the element of structure and has something to say of the nature of Burke's prose; but, unlike Elton, he distinguishes this from the description of Burke's oratory—although without maintaining the distinction: he illustrates Burke's peculiar oratorical power from a pamphlet as readily as from a speech. His categories seem less mechanical than those of Elton, who is more concerned with the development of the paragraph than with the general cast of Burke's style; nor is his judgment warped, as is

¹ *Cambridge History of English Literature*, New York, 1914, XI, 30-5.

Stephenson's, by having a theory to market. Each has suffered from the necessity of compression. Yet, all told, Grierson realizes better than the others that Burke's task was not merely to express his thoughts and his feelings in distinguished prose, but to communicate his thoughts and his feelings effectively. It is hardly true, however, that Grierson has in mind the actual audience of Burke; the audience of Grierson's vision seems to be universalized, to consist of the judicious listeners or readers of any age. Those judicious listeners have no practical interest in the situation; they have only a philosophical and æsthetic interest.

Of Taine in his description of Burke it cannot be said that he descends to the minutiae of style. He deals with his author's character and ideas, as do all the critics of this group, but his comments on style are simply a single impression, vivid and picturesque:

Burke had one of those fertile and precise imaginations which believe that finished knowledge is an inner view, which never quits a subject without having clothed it in its colors and forms. . . . To all these powers of mind, which constitute a man of system, he added all those energies of heart which constitute an enthusiast. . . . He brought to politics a horror of crime, a vivacity and sincerity of conscience, a sensibility, which seem suitable only to a young man.

. . . The vast amount of his works rolls impetuously in a current of eloquence. Sometimes a spoken or written discourse needs a whole volume to unfold the train of his multiplied proofs and courageous anger. It is either the exposé of a ministry, or the whole history of British India, or the complete theory of revolutions . . . which comes down like a vast overflowing stream. . . . Doubtless there is foam on its eddies, mud in its bed; thousands of strange creatures sport wildly on its surface: he does not select, he lavishes. . . . Nothing strikes him as in excess. . . . He continues half a barbarian, battenning in exaggeration and violence; but his fire is so sustained, his conviction so strong, his emotion so warm and abundant, that we suffer him to go on, forget our repugnance, see in his irregularities and his trespasses only the outpourings of a great heart and a deep mind, too open and too full.¹

This is brilliant writing, unencumbered by the subaltern's interest in tactics, but it is strategy as described by a war-correspondent, not by a general. We get from it little light on how Burke solved the problem that confronts every orator: so to present ideas as to bring them into the consciousness of his hearers.

Where the critic divides his interest between the man and the

¹ H. A. Taine, *History of English Literature*, tr. H. Van Laun, London, 1878, II, 81-3.

work, without allowing either interest to predominate, he is often compelled to consider the work *in toto*, and we get only observations so generalized as not to include consideration of the form of the work. The speech is not thought of as essentially a means of influence; it is regarded as a specimen of prose, or as an example of philosophic thought. The date, the historical interest, the orator's own intention, are often lost from view; and criticism suffers in consequence.

IV

We have seen that the critic who is occupied chiefly with the orator as a man can contribute, although indirectly, to the study of the orator as such, and that the critic who divides his attention between the man and the work must effect a fusion of the two interests if he is to help materially in the understanding of the orator. We come now to critics more distinctly literary in aim. Within this group several classes may be discriminated: the first comprises the judicial critics; the second includes the interpretative critics who take the point of view of literary style generally, regarding the speech as an essay, or as a specimen of prose; the third and last group is composed of the writers who tend to regard the speech as a special literary form.

The type of criticism that attempts a judicial evaluation of the literary merits of the work—of the orator's "literary remains"—tends to center the inquiry on the question: Is this literature? The futility of the question appears equally in the affirmative and in the negative replies to it. The fault is less with the query, however, than with the hastiness of the answers generally given. For the most part, the critics who raise this problem are not disposed really to consider it: they formulate no conception either of literature or of oratory; they will not consider their own literary standards critically and comprehensively. In short, the question is employed as a way to dispose briefly of the subject of a lecture or of a short essay in a survey of a national literature.

Thus Phelps, in his treatment of Webster and Lincoln in *Some Makers of American Literature*,¹ tells us that they have a place in literature by virtue of their style, gives us some excerpts from Lin-

¹ Boston, 1923.

coln and some comments on Webster's politics, but offers no reasoned criticism. St. Peter swings wide the gates of the literary heaven, but does not explain his action. We may suspect that the solemn award of a "place in literature" sometimes conceals the absence of any real principle of judgment.

Professor Trent is less easily satisfied that Webster deserves a "place in literature." He grants Webster's power to stimulate patriotism, his sonorous dignity and massiveness, his clearness and strength of style, his powers of dramatic description. But he finds only occasional splendor of imagination, discovers no soaring quality of intelligence, and is not dazzled by his philosophy or his grasp of history. Mr. Trent would like more vivacity and humor and color in Webster's style.¹ This mode of deciding Webster's place in or out of literature is important to us only as it reveals the critic's method of judging. Trent looks for clearness and strength, imagination, philosophic grasp, vivacity, humor, color in style. This is excellent so far as it goes, but goes no further than to suggest some qualities which are to be sought in any and all works of literary art: in dramas, in essays, in lyric poems, as well as in speeches.

Let us take a third judge. Gosse will not allow Burke to be a complete master of English prose: "Notwithstanding all its magnificence, it appears to me that the prose of Burke lacks the variety, the delicacy, the modulated music of the very finest writers."² Gosse adds that Burke lacks flexibility, humor, and pathos. As critical method, this is one with that of Trent.

Gosse, with his question about mastery of prose, does not directly ask, "Is this literature?" Henry Cabot Lodge does, and his treatment of Webster (in the *Cambridge History of American Literature*) is curious. Lodge is concerned to show that Webster belongs to literature, and to explain the quality in his work that gives him a place among the best makers of literature. The test applied is permanence: Is Webster still read? The answer is, yes, for he is part of every schoolboy's education, and is the most quoted author in Congress. The sight of a literary critic resigning the judicial bench to the schoolmaster and the Congressman is an enjoyable one; as enjoyable as Mr. H. L. Mencken's reaction to it would be; but one could

¹ W. P. Trent, *History of American Literature, 1607-1865*, New York, 1917, pp. 576-7.

² Edmund Gosse, *History of Eighteenth Century English Literature, 1660-1780*, London, 1889, pp. 365-6.

wish for grounds more relative than this. Mr. Lodge goes on to account for Webster's permanence: it lies in his power to impart to rhetoric the literary touch. The distinction between rhetoric and literature is not explained, but apparently the matter lies thus: rhetorical verse may be poetry; Byron is an example. Rhetorical prose is not literature until there is added the literary touch. We get a clue as to how the literary touch may be added: put in something imaginative, something that strikes the hearer at once. The example chosen by Lodge is a passage from Webster in which the imaginative or literary touch is given by the single word "mildew."¹ This method of criticism, too, we may reduce to that of Trent, with the exception that only one quality—imagination—is requisite for admission to the literary Valhalla.

Whether the critic's standard be imagination, or this together with other qualities such as intelligence, vivacity, humor, or whether it be merely "style," undefined and unexplained, the point of view is always that of the printed page. The oration is lost from view, and becomes an exercise in prose, musical, colorful, varied, and delicate, but, so far as the critic is concerned, formless and purposeless. Distinctions of literary type or kind are erased; the architectonic element is neglected; and the speech is regarded as a musical meditation might be regarded: as a kind of harmonious musing that drifts pleasantly along, with little of inner form and nothing of objective purpose. This, it should be recognized, is not the result of judicial criticism so much as the result of the attempt to decide too hastily whether a given work is to be admitted into the canon of literature.

V

It is, perhaps, natural for the historian of literature to reduce all literary production to one standard, and thus to discuss only the common elements in all prose. One can understand also that the biographer, when in the course of his task he must turn literary critic, finds himself often inadequately equipped and his judgment of little value, except on the scale of literature generally rather than of oratory or of any given type. More is to be expected, however, of those who set up as literary critics in the first instance: those who deal directly with Webster's style, or with Lincoln as man of letters.

¹ *Cambridge History of American Literature*, New York, 1918, II, 101.

We shall find such critics as Whipple, Hazlitt, and Saintsbury devoting themselves to the description of literary style in the orators whom they discuss. Like the summary judicial critics we have mentioned, their center of interest is the work; but they are less hurried than Gosse and Lodge and Phelps and Trent; and their aim is not judgment so much as understanding. Yet their interpretations, in the main, take the point of view of the printed page, of the prose essay. Only to a slight degree is there a shift to another point of view, that of the orator in relation to the audience on whom he exerts his influence; the immediate public begins to loom a little larger; the essential nature of the oration as a type begins to be suggested.

Saintsbury has a procedure which much resembles that of Elton, though we must note the fact that the former omits consideration of Burke as a personality and centers attention on his work. We saw that Elton, in his passages on Burke's style, attends both to the larger elements of structure and to such relatively minute points as the management of the sentence and the clause. In Saintsbury the range of considerations is the same. At times, indeed, the juxtaposition of large and small ideas is ludicrous, as when one sentence ends by awarding to Burke literary immortality, and the next describes the sentences of an early work as "short and crisp, arranged with succinct antithetic parallels, which seldom exceed a single pair of clauses."¹ The award of immortality is not, it should be said, based entirely on the shortness of Burke's sentences in his earliest works. Indeed much of Saintsbury's comment is of decided interest:

The style of Burke is necessarily to be considered throughout as conditioned by oratory. . . . In other words, he was first of all a rhetorician, and probably the greatest that modern times have ever produced. But his rhetoric always inclined much more to the written than to the spoken form, with results annoying perhaps to him at the time, but even to him satisfactory afterwards, and an inestimable gain to the world. . . .

The most important of these properties of Burke's style, in so far as it is possible to enumerate them here, are as follows. First of all, and most distinctive, so much so as to have escaped no competent critic, is a very curious and, until his example made it imitable, nearly unique faculty of building up an argument or a picture by a succession of complementary strokes, not added at haphazard but growing out of and onto one another. No one has ever been such a master of the best and grandest kind of the figure called . . . Amplification, and this . . . is the direct implement by which he achieves his greatest effects.

¹ G. E. B. Saintsbury, *Short History of English Literature*, New York, 1915, p. 630.

. . . The piece [*Present Discontents*] may be said to consist of a certain number of specially labored paragraphs in which the arguments or pictures just spoken of are put as forcibly as the author can put them, and as a rule in a succession of shortish sentences, built up and glued together with the strength and flexibility of a newly fashioned fishing-rod. In the intervals the texts thus given are turned about, commented on, justified, or discussed in detail, in a rhetoric for the most part, though not always, rather less serried, less evidently burnished, and in less full dress. And this general arrangement proceeds through the rest of his works.¹

After a number of comments on Burke's skill in handling various kinds of ornament, such as humor, epigram, simile, Saintsbury returns to the idea that Burke's special and definite weapon was "imaginative argument, and the marshalling of vast masses of complicated detail into properly rhetorical battalions or (to alter the image) mosaic pictures of enduring beauty."² Saintsbury's attitude toward the communicative, impulsive nature of the orator's task is indicated in a passage on the well-known description of Windsor Castle. This description the critic terms "at once . . . a perfect harmonic chord, a complete visual picture, and a forcible argument."³ It is significant that he adds, "The minor rhetoric, the suasive purpose [presumably the argumentative intent] must be kept in view; if it be left out the thing loses"; and holds Burke "far below Browne, who had no need of purpose."⁴ It is less important that a critic think well of the suasive purpose than that he reckon with it, and of Saintsbury at least it must be said that he recognizes it, although grudgingly; but it cannot be said that Saintsbury has a clear conception of rhetoric as the art of communication: sometimes it means the art of prose, sometimes that of suasion.

Hazlitt's method of dealing with Burke resembles Taine's as Saintsbury's resembles that of Elton. In Hazlitt we have a critic who deals with style in the large; details of rhythm, of sentence pattern, of imagery, are ignored. His principal criticism of Burke as orator is contained in the well-known contrast with Chatham, really a contrast of mind and temperament in relation to oratorical style. He follows this with some excellent comment on Burke's prose style; nothing more is said of his oratory; only in a few passages do we get a flash of light on the relation of Burke to his

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 629-30.

² *Ibid.*, p. 631.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

audience, as in the remark about his eagerness to impress his reader, and in the description of his conversational quality. It is notable too that Hazlitt finds those works which never had the form of speeches the most significant and most typical of Burke's style.

Burke was so far from being a gaudy or flowery writer, that he was one of the severest writers we have. His words are the most like things; his style is the most strictly limited to the subject. He unites every extreme and every variety of composition; the lowest and the meanest words and descriptions with the highest. . . . He had no other object but to produce the strongest impression on his reader, by giving the truest, the most characteristic, the fullest, and most forcible description of things, trusting to the power of his own mind to mold them into grace and beauty. . . . Burke most frequently produced an effect by the remoteness and novelty of his combinations, by the force of contrast, by the striking manner in which the most opposite and unpromising materials were harmoniously blended together; not by laying his hands on all the fine things he could think of, but by bringing together those things which he knew would blaze out into glorious light by their collision.¹

Twelve years after writing the essay from which we have quoted, Hazlitt had occasion to revise his estimate of Burke as a statesman; but his sketch of Burke's style is essentially unaltered.² In Hazlitt we find a sense of style as an instrument of communication; that sense is no stronger in dealing with Burke's speeches than in dealing with his pamphlets, but it gives to Hazlitt's criticisms a reality not often found. What is lacking is a clear sense of Burke's communicative impulse, of his persuasive purpose, as operating in a concrete situation. Hazlitt does not suggest the background of Burke's speeches, ignores the events that called them forth. He views his subject, in a sense, as Grierson does: as speaking to the judicious but disinterested hearer of any age other than Burke's own. But the problem of the speaker, as well as of the pamphleteer, is to interest men here and now; the understanding of that problem requires, on the part of the critic, a strong historical sense for the ideas and attitudes of the people (not merely of their leaders), and a full knowledge of the public opinion of the times in which the orator spoke. This we do not find in Hazlitt.

Two recent writers on Lincoln commit the opposite error: they devote themselves so completely to description of the situation in

¹ *Sketches and Essays*, ed. W. C. Hazlitt, London, 1872, II, 420-1.

² *Political Essays with Sketches of Public Characters*, London, 1819, pp. 264-79.

which Lincoln wrote as to leave no room for criticism. L. E. Robinson's *Lincoln as Man of Letters*¹ is a biography rewritten around Lincoln's writings. It is nothing more. Instead of giving us a criticism, Professor Robinson has furnished us with some of the materials of the critic; his own judgments are too largely laudatory to cast much light. The book, therefore, is not all that its title implies. A single chapter of accurate summary and evaluation would do much to increase our understanding of Lincoln as man of letters, even though it said nothing of Lincoln as speaker. A chapter or two on Lincoln's work in various kinds—letters, state papers, speeches—would help us to a finer discrimination than Professor Robinson's book offers. Again, the proper estimate of style in any satisfactory sense requires us to do more than to weigh the soundness of an author's thought and to notice the isolated beauties of his expression. Something should be said of structure, something of adaptation to the immediate audience, whose convictions and habits of thought, whose literary usages, and whose general cultural background all condition the work both of writer and speaker. Mr. Robinson has given us the political situation as a problem in controlling political forces, with little regard to the force even of public opinion, and with almost none to the cultural background. Lincoln's works, therefore, emerge as items in a political sequence, but not as resultants of the life of his time.

Some of the deficiencies of Robinson's volume are supplied by Dodge's essay, *Lincoln as Master of Words*.² Dodge considers, more definitely than Robinson, the types in which Lincoln worked: he separates messages from campaign speeches, letters from occasional addresses. He has an eye on Lincoln's relation to his audience, but this manifests itself chiefly in an account of the immediate reception of a work. Reports of newspaper comments on the speeches may be a notable addition to Lincolniana; supported by more political information and more insight than Mr. Dodge's short book reveals, they might become an aid to the critical evaluation of the speeches. But in themselves they are neither a criticism nor an interpretation of Lincoln's mastery of words.

Robinson and Dodge, then, stand at opposite poles to Saintsbury and Hazlitt. The date is put in opposition to the work as a center of

¹ New York, 1923.

² New York, 1924.

critical interest. If the two writers on Lincoln lack a full perception of their author's background, they do not lack a sense of its importance. If the critics of Burke do not produce a complete and rounded criticism, neither do they lose themselves in preparatory studies. Each method is incomplete; each should supplement the other.

We turn now to a critic who neglects the contribution of history to the study of oratory, but who has two compensating merits: the merit of recognizing the types in which his subject worked, and the merit of remembering that an orator has as his audience, not posterity, but certain classes of his own contemporaries. Whipple's essay on Webster is open to attack from various directions: it is padded, it "dates," it is overlaudatory, it is overpatriotic, it lacks distinction of style. But there is wheat in the chaff. Scattered through the customary discussion of Webster's choice of words, his power of epithet, his compactness of statement, his images, the development of his style, are definite suggestions of a new point of view. It is the point of view of the actual audience. To Whipple, at times at least, Webster was not a writer, but a speaker; the critic tries to imagine the man, and also his hearers; he thinks of the speech as a communication to a certain body of auditors. A phrase often betrays a mental attitude; Whipple alone of the critics we have mentioned would have written of "the eloquence, the moral power, he infused into his reasoning, so as to make the dullest citation of legal authority *tell* on the minds he addressed."¹ Nor would any other writer of this group have attempted to distinguish the types of audience Webster met. That Whipple's effort is a rambling and incoherent one, is not here in point. Nor is it pertinent that the critic goes completely astray in explaining why Webster's speeches have the nature of "organic formations, or at least of skilful engineering or architectural constructions"; though to say that the art of giving objective reality to a speech consists only of "a happy collocation and combination of words"² is certainly as far as possible from explaining Webster's sense of structure. What is significant in Whipple's essay is the occasional indication of a point of view that includes the audience. Such an indication is the passage in which the critic explains the source of Webster's influence:

¹ E. P. Whipple, "Daniel Webster as a Master of English Style," in *American Literature*, Boston, 1887, p. 157.

² *Ibid.*, p. 208.

What gave Webster his immense influence over the opinions of the people of New England, was first, his power of so "putting things" that everybody could understand his statements; secondly, his power of so framing his arguments that all the steps, from one point to another, in a logical series, could be clearly apprehended by every intelligent farmer or mechanic who had a thoughtful interest in the affairs of the country; and thirdly, his power of inflaming the sentiment of patriotism in all honest and well-intentioned men by overwhelming appeals to that sentiment, so that after convincing their understandings, he clinched the matter by sweeping away their wills.

Perhaps to these sources of influence may be added . . . a genuine respect for the intellect, as well as for the manhood, of average men.¹

In various ways the descriptive critics recognize the orator's function. In some, that recognition takes the form of a regard to the background of the speeches; in others, it takes the form of a regard to the effectiveness of the work, though that effectiveness is often construed as for the reader rather than for the listener. The "minor rhetoric, the suasive purpose" is beginning to be felt, though not always recognized and never fully taken into account.

VI

The distinction involved in the presence of a persuasive purpose is clearly recognized by some of those who have written on oratory, and by some biographers and historians. The writers now to be mentioned are aware, more keenly than any of those we have so far met, of the speech as a literary form—or if not as a literary form, then as a form of power; they tend accordingly to deal with the orator's work as limited by the conditions of the platform and the occasion, and to summon history to the aid of criticism.

The method of approach of the critics of oratory as oratory is well put by Lord Curzon at the beginning of his essay, *Modern Parliamentary Eloquence*:

In dealing with the Parliamentary speakers of our time I shall, accordingly, confine myself to those whom I have myself heard, or for whom I can quote the testimony of others who heard them; and I shall not regard them as prose writers or literary men, still less as purveyors of instruction to their own or to future generations, but as men who produced, by the exercise of certain talents of speech, a definite impression upon contemporary audiences, and whose reputation for eloquence must be judged by that test, and that test alone.²

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 144.

² London, 1914, p. 7.

The last phrase, "that test alone," would be scanned; the judgment of orators is not solely to be determined by the impression of contemporary audiences. For the present it will be enough to note the topics touched in Curzon's anecdotes and reminiscences—his lecture is far from a systematic or searching inquiry into the subject, and is of interest rather for its method of approach than for any considered study of an orator or of a period. We value him for his promises rather than for his performance. Curzon deals with the relative rank of speakers, with the comparative value of various speeches by a single man, with the orator's appearance and demeanor, with his mode of preparation and of delivery, with his mastery of epigram or image. Skill in seizing upon the dominant characteristics of each of his subjects saves the author from the worst triviality of reminiscence. Throughout, the point of view is that of the man experienced in public life discussing the eloquence of other public men, most of whom he had known and actually heard. That this is not the point of view of criticism in any strict sense, is of course true; but the *naïveté* and directness of this observer correct forcibly some of the extravagances we have been examining.

The lecture on Chatham as an orator by H. M. Butler exemplifies a very different method arising from a different subject and purpose. The lecturer is thinking, he tells us, "of Oratory partly as an art, partly as a branch of literature, partly as a power of making history."¹ His method is first to touch lightly upon Chatham's early training and upon his mode of preparing and delivering his speeches; next, to present some of the general judgments upon the Great Commoner, whether of contemporaries or of later historians; then to re-create a few of the most important speeches, partly by picturing the historical setting, partly by quotation, partly by the comments of contemporary writers. The purpose of the essay is "to reawaken, however faintly, some echoes of the kingly voice of a genuine Patriot, of whom his country is still justly proud."² The patriotic purpose we may ignore, but the wish to reconstruct the *mise en scène* of Chatham's speeches, to put the modern Oxford audience at the point of view of those who listened to the voice of Pitt, saw the flash of his eye and felt the force of his noble bearing, this is a purpose different from that of the critics whom we have examined. It may be objected

¹ *Lord Chatham as an Orator*, Oxford, 1912, p. 5.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 39-40.

that Butler's lecture has the defects of its method: the amenities observed by a Cambridge don delivering a formal lecture at Oxford keep us from getting on with the subject; the brevity of the discourse prevents anything like a full treatment; the aim, revivification of the past, must be very broadly interpreted if it is to be really critical. Let us admit these things; it still is true that in a few pages the essential features of Pitt's eloquence are brought vividly before us, and that this is accomplished by thinking of the speech as originally delivered to its first audience rather than as read by the modern reader.

The same sense of the speaker in his relation to his audience appears in Lecky's account of Burke. This account, too, is marked by the use of contemporary witnesses, and of comparisons with Burke's great rivals. But let Lecky's method speak in part for itself:

He spoke too often, too vehemently, and much too long; and his eloquence, though in the highest degree intellectual, powerful, various, and original, was not well adapted to a popular audience. He had little or nothing of that fire and majesty of declamation with which Chatham thrilled his hearers, and often almost overawed opposition; and as a parliamentary debater he was far inferior to Charles Fox. . . . Burke was not inferior to Fox in readiness, and in the power of clear and cogent reasoning. His wit, though not of the highest order, was only equalled by that of Townshend, Sheridan, and perhaps North, and it rarely failed in its effect upon the House. He far surpassed every other speaker in the copiousness and correctness of his diction, in the range of knowledge he brought to bear on every subject of debate, in the richness and variety of his imagination, in the gorgeous beauty of his descriptive passages, in the depth of the philosophical reflections and the felicity of the personal sketches which he delighted in scattering over his speeches. But these gifts were frequently marred by a strange want of judgment, measure, and self-control. His speeches were full of episodes and digressions, of excessive ornamentation and illustration, of dissertations on general principles of politics, which were invaluable in themselves, but very unpalatable to a tired or excited House waiting eagerly for a division.¹

These sentences suggest, and the pages from which they are excerpted show, that historical imagination has led Lecky to regard Burke as primarily a speaker, both limited and formed by the conditions of his platform; and they exemplify, too, a happier use of stylistic categories than do the essays of Curzon and Butler. The requirements of the historian's art have fused the character sketch

¹ W. E. H. Lecky, *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, New York, 1888, III, 203-4.

and the literary criticism; the fusing agent has been the conception of Burke as a public man, and of his work as public address. Both Lecky's biographical interpretation and his literary criticism are less subtle than that of Grierson; but Lecky is more definitely guided in his treatment of Burke by the conception of oratory as a special form of the literature of power and as a form molded always by the pressure of the time.

The merits of Lecky are contained, in ampler form, in Morley's biography of Gladstone. The long and varied career of the great parliamentarian makes a general summary and final judgment difficult and perhaps inadvisable; Morley does not attempt them. But his running account of Gladstone as orator, if assembled from his thousand pages, is an admirable example of what can be done by one who has the point of view of the public man, sympathy with his subject, and understanding of the speaker's art. Morley gives us much contemporary reporting: the descriptions and judgments of journalists at various stages in Gladstone's career, the impression made by the speeches upon delivery, comparison with other speakers of the time. Here history is contemporary: the biographer was himself the witness of much that he describes, and has the experienced parliamentarian's flair for the scene and the situation. Gladstone's temperament and physical equipment for the platform, his training in the art of speaking, the nature of his chief appeals, the factor of character and personality, these are some of the topics repeatedly touched. There is added a sense for the permanent results of Gladstone's speaking: not the votes in the House merely, but the changed state of public opinion brought about by the speeches.

Mr. Gladstone conquered the House, because he was saturated with a subject and its arguments; because he could state and enforce his case; because he plainly believed every word he said, and earnestly wished to press the same belief into the minds of his hearers; finally because he was from the first an eager and a powerful athlete. . . . Yet with this inborn readiness for combat, nobody was less addicted to aggression or provocation. . . .

In finance, the most important of all the many fields of his activity, Mr. Gladstone had the signal distinction of creating the public opinion by which he worked, and warming the climate in which his projects thrived. . . . Nobody denies that he was often declamatory and discursive, that he often overargued and overrefined; [but] he nowhere exerted greater influence than in that department of affairs where words out of relation to fact are most surely exposed. If he often carried the proper rhetorical arts of ampli-

fication and development to excess, yet the basis of fact was both sound and clear. . . . Just as Macaulay made thousands read history, who before had turned from it as dry and repulsive, so Mr. Gladstone made thousands eager to follow the public balance-sheet, and the whole nation became his audience. . . .

[In the Midlothian campaign] it was the orator of concrete detail, of inductive instances, of energetic and immediate object; the orator confidently and by sure touch startling into watchfulness the whole spirit of civil duty in man; elastic and supple, pressing fact and figure with a fervid insistence that was known from his career and character to be neither forced nor feigned, but to be himself. In a word, it was a man—a man impressing himself upon the kindled throngs by the breadth of his survey of great affairs of life and nations, by the depth of his vision, by the power of his stroke.¹

Objections may be made to Morley's method, chiefly on the ground of omissions. Though much is done to re-create the scene, though ample use is made of the date and the man, there is little formal analysis of the work. It is as if one had come from the House of Commons after hearing the speeches, stirred to enthusiasm but a little confused by the wealth of argument; not as if one came from a calm study of the speeches; not even as if one had corrected personal impressions by such a study. Of the structure of the speeches, little is said; but a few perorations are quoted; the details of style, one feels, although noticed at too great length by some critics, might well receive a modicum of attention here.

Although these deficiencies of Morley's treatment are not supplied by Bryce in his short and popular sketch of Gladstone, there is a summary which well supplements the running account offered by Morley. It has the merit of dealing explicitly with the orator as orator, and it offers more analysis and an adequate judgment by a qualified critic.

Twenty years hence Mr. Gladstone's [speeches] will not be read, except of course by historians. They are too long, too diffuse, too minute in their handling of details, too elaborately qualified in their enunciation of general principles. They contain few epigrams and few . . . weighty thoughts put into telling phrases. . . . The style, in short, is not sufficiently rich or finished to give a perpetual interest to matters whose practical importance has vanished. . . .

If, on the other hand, Mr. Gladstone be judged by the impression he made on his own time, his place will be high in the front rank. . . . His oratory had many conspicuous merits. There was a lively imagination, which enabled him to relieve even dull matter by pleasing figures, together with a

¹ *Life of William Ewart Gladstone*, I, 193-4; II, 54-5, 593.

large command of quotations and illustrations. . . . There was admirable lucidity and accuracy in exposition. There was great skill in the disposition and marshalling of his arguments, and finally . . . there was a wonderful variety and grace of appropriate gesture. But above and beyond everything else which enthralled the listener, there were four qualities, two specially conspicuous in the substance of his eloquence—inventiveness and elevation; two not less remarkable in his manner—force in the delivery, expressive modulation in the voice.¹

One is tempted to say that Morley has provided the historical setting, Bryce the critical verdict. The statement would be only partially true, for Morley does much more than set the scene. He enacts the drama; and thus he conveys his judgment—not, it is true, in the form of a critical estimate, but in the course of his narrative. The difference between these two excellent accounts is a difference in emphasis. The one lays stress on the setting; the other takes it for granted. The one tries to suggest his judgment by description; the other employs the formal categories of criticism.

Less full and rounded than either of these descriptions of an orator's style is Trevelyan's estimate of Bright. Yet in a few pages the biographer has indicated clearly the two distinguishing features of Bright's eloquence—the moral weight he carried with his audience, the persuasiveness of his visible earnestness and of his reputation for integrity, and his "sense for the value of words and for the rhythm of words and sentences";² has drawn a contrast between Bright and Gladstone; and has added a description of Bright's mode of work, together with some comments on the permanence of the speeches and various examples of details of his style. Only the mass and weight of that style are not represented.

If we leave the biographers and return to those who, like Curzon and Butler, have written directly upon eloquence, we find little of importance. Of the two general histories of oratory that we have in English, Hardwicke's³ is so ill organized and so ill written as to be negligible; that by Sears⁴ may deserve mention. It is uneven and inaccurate. It is rather a popular handbook which strings together the great names than a history: the author does not seriously consider the evolution of oratory. His sketches are of unequal merit; some

¹ Gladstone, *his Characteristics as Man and Statesman*, New York, 1898, pp. 41-4.

² G. M. Trevelyan, *Life of John Bright*, Boston, 1913, p. 384.

³ Henry Hardwicke, *History of Oratory and Orators*, New York, 1896.

⁴ Lorenzo Sears, *History of Oratory*, Chicago, 1896.

give way to the interest in mere anecdote; some yield too large a place to biographical detail; others are given over to moralizing. Sears touches most of the topics of rhetorical criticism without making the point of view of public address dominant; his work is too episodic for that. And any given criticism shows marked defects in execution. It would not be fair to compare Sears's show-piece, his chapter on Webster, with Morley or Bryce on Gladstone; but compare it with Trevelyan's few pages on Bright. With far greater economy, Trevelyan tells us more of Bright as a speaker than Sears can of Webster. The *History of Oratory* gives us little more than hints and suggestions of a good method.

With a single exception, the collections of eloquence have no critical significance. The exception is *Select British Eloquence*,¹ edited by Chauncey A. Goodrich, who prefaced the works of each of his orators with a sketch partly biographical and partly critical. The criticisms of Goodrich, like those of Sears, are of unequal value; some are slight, yet none descends to mere anecdote, and at his best, as in the characterizations of the eloquence of Chatham, Fox, and Burke, Goodrich reveals a more powerful grasp and a more comprehensive view of his problem than does Sears, as well as a more consistent view of his subject as a speaker. Sears at times takes the point of view of the printed page; Goodrich consistently thinks of the speeches he discusses as intended for oral delivery.

Goodrich's topics of criticism are: the orator's training, mode of work, personal (physical) qualifications, character as known to his audience, range of powers, dominant traits as a speaker. He deals too, of course, with those topics to which certain of the critics we have noticed confine themselves: illustration, ornament, gift of phrase, diction, wit, imagination, arrangement. But these he does not over-emphasize, nor view as independent of their effect upon an audience. Thus he can say of Chatham's sentence structure: "The sentences are not rounded or balanced periods, but are made up of short clauses, which flash themselves upon the mind with all the vividness of distinct ideas, and yet are closely connected together as tending to the same point, and uniting to form larger masses of thought."² Perhaps the best brief indication of Goodrich's quality is his statement of Fox's "leading peculiarities."³ According to Goodrich, Fox

¹ New York, 1852.

² P. 75.

³ P. 461.

had a luminous simplicity, which combined unity of impression with irregular arrangement; he took everything in the concrete; he struck instantly at the heart of his subject, going to the issue at once; he did not amplify, he repeated; he rarely employed a preconceived order of argument; reasoning was his *forte*, but it was the reasoning of the debater; he abounded in *hits*—abrupt and startling turns of thought—and in side-blows delivered in passing; he was often dramatic; he had astonishing skill in turning the course of debate to his own advantage. Here is the point of view of public address, expressed as clearly as in Morley or in Curzon, though in a different idiom, and without the biographer's fulness of treatment.

But probably the best single specimen of the kind of criticism now under discussion is Morley's chapter on Cobden as an agitator. This is as admirable a summary sketch as the same writer's account of Gladstone is a detailed historical picture. Bryce's brief essay on Gladstone is inferior to it both in the range of its technical criticisms and in the extent to which the critic realizes the situation in which his subject was an actor. In a few pages Morley has drawn the physical characteristics of his subject, his bent of mind, temperament, idiosyncrasies; has compared and contrasted Cobden with his great associate, Bright; has given us contemporary judgments; has sketched out the dominant quality of his style, its variety and range; has noted Cobden's attitude to his hearers, his view of human nature; and has dealt with the impression given by Cobden's printed speeches and the total impression of his personality on the platform. The method, the angle of approach, the categories of description or of criticism, are the same as those employed in the great life of Gladstone; but we find them here condensed into twenty pages. It will be worth while to present the most interesting parts of Morley's criticism, if only for comparison with some of the passages already given:

I have asked many scores of those who knew him, Conservatives as well as Liberals, what this secret [of his oratorical success] was, and in no single case did my interlocutor fail to begin, and in nearly every case he ended as he had begun, with the word *persuasiveness*. Cobden made his way to men's hearts by the union which they saw in him of simplicity, earnestness, and conviction, with a singular facility of exposition. This facility consisted in a remarkable power of apt and homely illustration, and a curious ingenuity in framing the argument that happened to be wanted. Besides his skill in thus hitting on the right argument, Cobden had the oratorical art of presenting

it in the way that made its admission to the understanding of a listener easy and undenied. He always seemed to have made exactly the right degree of allowance for the difficulty with which men follow a speech, as compared with the ease of following the same argument on a printed page. . . .

Though he abounded in matter, Cobden can hardly be described as copious. He is neat and pointed, nor is his argument ever left unclinched; but he permits himself no large excursions. What he was thinking of was the matter immediately in hand, the audience before his eyes, the point that would tell best then and there, and would be most likely to remain in men's recollections. . . . What is remarkable is, that while he kept close to the matter and substance of his case, and resorted comparatively little to sarcasm, humor, invective, pathos, or the other elements that are catalogued in manuals of rhetoric, yet no speaker was ever further removed from prosiness, or came into more real and sympathetic contact with his audience. . . .

After all, it is not tropes and perorations that make the popular speaker; it is the whole impression of his personality. We who only read them can discern certain admirable qualities in Cobden's speeches; aptness in choosing topics, lucidity in presenting them, buoyant confidence in pressing them home. But those who listened to them felt much more than all this. They were delighted by mingled vivacity and ease, by directness, by spontaneousness and reality, by the charm . . . of personal friendliness and undisguised cordiality.¹

These passages are written in the spirit of the critic of public speaking. They have the point of view that is but faintly suggested in Elton and Grierson, that Saintsbury recognizes but does not use, and Hazlitt uses but does not recognize, and that Whipple, however irregularly, both understands and employs. But such critics as Curzon and Butler, Sears and Goodrich, Trevelyan and Bryce, think differently of their problem; they take the point of view of public address consistently and without question. Morley's superiority is not in conception, but in execution. In all the writers of this group, whether historians, biographers, or professed students of oratory, there is a consciousness that oratory is partly an art, partly a power of making history, and occasionally a branch of literature. Style is less considered for its own sake than for its effect in a given situation. The question of literary immortality is regarded as beside the mark, or else, as in Bryce, as a separate question requiring separate consideration. There are, of course, differences of emphasis. Some of the biographers may be thought to deal too lightly with style. Sears perhaps thinks too little of the time, of the drama of the situation, and too much of style. But we have arrived at a different attitude towards the orator; his function is recognized for what it is:

¹ *Life of Richard Cobden, Boston, 1881, pp. 130-2.*

the art of influencing men in some concrete situation. Neither the personal nor the literary evaluation is the primary object. The critic speaks of the orator as a public man whose function it is to exert his influence by speech.

VII

Any attempt to sum up the results of this casual survey of what some writers have said of some public speakers must deal with the differences between literary criticism as represented by Gosse and Trent, by Elton and Grierson, and rhetorical criticism as represented by Curzon, Morley, Bryce, and Trevelyan. The literary critics seem at first to have no common point of view and no agreement as to the categories of judgment or description. But by reading between their lines and searching for the main endeavor of these critics, one can discover at least a unity of purpose. Different in method as are Gosse, Elton, Saintsbury, Whipple, Hazlitt, the ends they have in view are not different.

Coupled with almost every description of the excellences of prose and with every attempt to describe the man in connection with his work, is the same effort as we find clearly and even arbitrarily expressed by those whom we have termed judicial critics. All the literary critics unite in the attempt to interpret the permanent value that they find in the work under consideration. That permanent value is not precisely indicated by the term beauty, but the two strands of æsthetic excellence and permanence are clearly found, not only in the avowed judicial criticism but in those writers who emphasize description rather than judgment. Thus Grierson says of Burke:

His preoccupation at every juncture with the fundamental issues of wise government, and the splendor of the eloquence in which he set forth these principles, an eloquence in which the wisdom of his thought and the felicity of his language and imagery seem inseparable from one another . . . have made his speeches and pamphlets a source of perennial freshness and interest.¹

Perhaps a critic of temper different from Grierson's—Saintsbury, for example—would turn from the wisdom of Burke's thought to the felicity of his language and imagery. But always there is implicit

¹ *Cambridge History of English Literature*, New York, 1914, XI, 8.

in the critic's mind the absolute standard of a timeless world: the wisdom of Burke's thought (found in the principles to which his mind always gravitates rather than in his decisions on points of policy) and the felicity of his language are not considered as of an age, but for all time. Whether the critic considers the technical excellence merely, or both technique and substance, his preoccupation is with that which age cannot wither nor custom stale. (From this point of view, the distinction between the speech and the pamphlet is of no moment, and Elton wisely speaks of Burke's favorite form as "oratory, uttered or written";¹ for a speech cannot be the subject of a permanent evaluation unless it is preserved in print.)

This is the implied attitude of all the literary critics. On this common ground their differences disappear or become merely differences of method or of competence. They are all, in various ways, interpreters of the permanent and universal values they find in the works of which they treat. Nor can there be any quarrel with this attitude—unless all standards be swept away. The impressionist and the historian of the evolution of literature as a self-contained activity may deny the utility or the possibility of a truly judicial criticism. But the human mind insists upon judgment *sub specie æternitatis*. The motive often appears as a merely practical one: the reader wishes to be apprised of the best that has been said and thought in all ages; he is less concerned with the descent of literary species or with the critic's adventures among masterpieces than with the perennial freshness and interest those masterpieces may hold for him. There is, of course, much more than a practical motive to justify the interest in permanent values; but this is not the place to raise a moot question of general critical theory. We wished only to note the common ground of literary criticism in its preoccupation with the thought and the eloquence which is permanent.

If now we turn to rhetorical criticism as we found it exemplified in the preceding section, we find that its point of view is patently single. It is not concerned with permanence, nor yet with beauty. It is concerned with effect. It regards a speech as a communication to a specific audience, and holds its business to be the analysis and appreciation of the orator's method of imparting his ideas to his hearers.

¹ Oliver Elton, *Survey of English Literature, 1780-1830*, London, 1912, I, 234.

Rhetoric, however, is a word that requires explanation; its use in connection with criticism is neither general nor consistent. The merely depreciatory sense in which it is often applied to bombast or false ornament need not delay us. The limited meaning which confines the term to the devices of a correct and even of an elegant prose style—in the sense of manner of writing and speaking—may also be eliminated, as likewise the broad interpretation which makes rhetoric inclusive of all style whether in prose or in poetry. There remain some definitions which have greater promise. We may mention first that of Aristotle: “the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion”;¹ this readily turns into the art of persuasion, as the editors of the *New English Dictionary* recognize when they define rhetoric as “the art of using language so as to persuade or influence others.” The gloss on “persuade” afforded by the additional term “influence” is worthy of note. Jebb achieves the same result by defining rhetoric as “the art of using language in such a way as to produce a desired impression upon the hearer or reader.”² There is yet a fourth definition, one which serves to illuminate the others as well as to emphasize their essential agreement: “taken broadly [rhetoric is] the science and art of communication in language”;³ the framers of this definition add that to throw the emphasis on communication is to emphasize prose, poetry being regarded as more distinctly expressive than communicative. A German writer has made a similar distinction between poetic as the art of poetry and rhetoric as the art of prose, but rather on the basis that prose is of the intellect, poetry of the imagination.⁴ Wackernagel’s basis for the distinction will hardly stand in face of the attitude of modern psychology to the “faculties”; yet the distinction itself is suggestive, and it does not contravene the more significant opposition of expression and communication. That opposition has been well stated, though with some exaggeration, by Professor Hudson:

The writer in pure literature has his eye on his subject; his subject has filled his mind and engaged his interest, and he must tell about it; his task is

¹ *Rhetoric*, ii, 2, tr. W. Rhys Roberts in *The Works of Aristotle*, XI, Oxford, 1924.

² Article “Rhetoric” in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 9th and 11th editions.

³ J. L. Gerig and F. N. Scott, article “Rhetoric” in the *New International Encyclopædia*.

⁴ K. H. W. Wackernagel, *Poetik, Rhetorik und Stilistik*, ed. L. Sieber, Halle, 1873, p. 11.

expression; his form and style are organic with his subject. The writer of rhetorical discourse has his eye upon the audience and occasion; his task is persuasion; his form and style are organic with the occasion.¹

The element of the author's personality should not be lost from sight in the case of the writer of pure literature; nor may the critic think of the audience and the occasion as alone conditioning the work of the composer of rhetorical discourse, unless indeed he include in the occasion both the personality of the speaker and the subject. The distinction is better put by Professor Baldwin:

Rhetoric meant to the ancient world the art of instructing and moving men in their affairs; poetic the art of sharpening and expanding their vision. . . . The one is composition of ideas; the other, composition of images. In the one field life is discussed; in the other it is presented. The type of the one is a public address, moving us to assent and action; the type of the other is a play, showing us [an] action moving to an end of character. The one argues and urges; the other represents. Though both appeal to imagination, the method of rhetoric is logical; the method of poetic, as well as its detail, is imaginative.²

It is noteworthy that in this passage there is nothing to oppose poetry, in its common acceptance of verse, to prose. Indeed, in discussing the four forms of discourse usually treated in textbooks, Baldwin explicitly classes exposition and argument under rhetoric, leaving narrative and description to the other field. But rhetoric has been applied to the art of prose by some who include under the term even nonmetrical works of fiction. This is the attitude of Wackernagel, already mentioned, and of Saintsbury, who observes that Aristotle's *Rhetoric* holds, "if not intentionally, yet actually, something of the same position towards Prose as that which the *Poetics* holds towards verse."³ In Saintsbury's view, the *Rhetoric* achieves this position in virtue of its third book, that on style and arrangement: the first two books contain "a great deal of matter which has either the faintest connection with literary criticism or else no connection with it at all."⁴ Saintsbury finds it objectionable in Aristotle that to him, "prose as prose is merely and avowedly a secondary con-

¹ H. H. Hudson, "The Field of Rhetoric," *Quarterly Journal of Speech Education*, IX (1923), 177. See also the same writer's "Rhetoric and Poetry," *ibid.*, X (1924), 143 ff.

² C. S. Baldwin, *Ancient Rhetoric and Poetic*, New York, 1924, p. 134.

³ G. E. B. Saintsbury, *History of Criticism and Literary Taste in Europe*, New York, 1900, I, 39.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

sideration: it is always in the main, and sometimes wholly, a mere necessary instrument of divers practical purposes,"¹ and that "he does not *wish* to consider a piece of prose as a work of art destined, first of all, if not finally, to fulfil its own laws on the one hand, and to give pleasure on the other."² The distinction between verse and prose has often troubled the waters of criticism. The explanation is probably that the outer form of a work is more easily understood and more constantly present to the mind than is the real form. Yet it is strange that those who find the distinction between verse and prose important should parallel this with a distinction between imagination and intellect, as if a novel had more affinities with a speech than with an epic. It is strange, too, that Saintsbury's own phrase about the right way to consider a "piece of prose"—as a work of art destined "to fulfil its own laws"—did not suggest to him the fundamental importance of a distinction between what he terms the minor or suasive rhetoric on the one hand, and on the other poetic, whether or not in verse. For poetry always is free to fulfil its own law, but the writer of rhetorical discourse is, in a sense, perpetually in bondage to the occasion and the audience; and in that fact we find the line of cleavage between rhetoric and poetic.

The distinction between rhetoric as theory of public address and poetic as theory of pure literature, says Professor Baldwin, "seems not to have controlled any consecutive movement of modern criticism."³ That it has not controlled the procedure of critics in dealing with orators is indicated in the foregoing pages; yet we have found, too, many suggestions of a better method, and some few critical performances against which the only charge is overcondensation.

Rhetorical criticism is necessarily analytical. The scheme of a rhetorical study includes the element of the speaker's personality as a conditioning factor; it includes also the public character of the man—not what he was, but what he was thought to be. It requires a description of the speaker's audience, and of the leading ideas with which he plied his hearers—his topics, the motives to which he appealed, the nature of the proofs he offered. These will reveal his own judgment of human nature in his audiences, and also his judgment

¹ *History of Criticism and Literary Taste in Europe*, p. 48.

² *Ibid.*, p. 52.

³ *Op. cit.*, p. 4.

on the questions which he discussed. Attention must be paid, too, to the relation of the surviving texts to what was actually uttered: in case the nature of the changes is known, there may be occasion to consider adaptation to two audiences—that which heard and that which read. Nor can rhetorical criticism omit the speaker's mode of arrangement and his mode of expression, nor his habit of preparation and his manner of delivery from the platform; though the last two are perhaps less significant. "Style"—in the sense which corresponds to diction and sentence movement—must receive attention, but only as one among various means that secure for the speaker ready access to the minds of his auditors. Finally, the effect of the discourse on its immediate hearers is not to be ignored, either in the testimony of witnesses, nor in the record of events. And throughout such a study one must conceive of the public man as influencing the men of his own times by the power of his discourse.

VIII

What is the relation of rhetorical criticism, so understood, to literary criticism? The latter is at once broader and more limited than rhetorical criticism. It is broader because of its concern with permanent values: because it takes no account of special purpose nor of immediate effect; because it views a literary work as the voice of a human spirit addressing itself to men of all ages and times; because the critic speaks as the spectator of all time and all existence. But this universalizing of attitude brings its own limits with it: the influence of the period is necessarily relegated to the background; interpretation in the light of the writer's intention and of his situation may be ignored or slighted; and the speaker who directed his words to a definite and limited group of hearers may be made to address a universal audience. The result can only be confusion. In short, the point of view of literary criticism is proper only to its own objects, the permanent works. Upon such as are found to lie without the pale, the verdict of literary criticism is of negative value merely, and its interpretation is false and misleading because it proceeds upon a wrong assumption. If Henry Clay and Charles Fox are to be dealt with at all, it must not be on the assumption that their works, in respect of wisdom and eloquence, are or ought to be sources of perennial freshness and interest. Morley has put the matter well:

The statesman who makes or dominates a crisis, who has to rouse and mold the mind of senate or nation, has something else to think about than the production of literary masterpieces. The great political speech, which for that matter is a sort of drama, is not made by passages for elegant extract or anthologies, but by personality, movement, climax, spectacle, and the action of the time.¹

But we cannot always divorce rhetorical criticism from literary. In the case of Fox or Clay or Cobden, as opposed to Fielding or Addison or De Quincey, it is proper to do so; the fact that language is a common medium to the writer of rhetorical discourse and to the writer in pure literature will give to the critics of each a common vocabulary of stylistic terms, but not a common standard. In the case of Burke the relation of the two points of view is more complex. Burke belongs to literature; but in all his important works he was a practitioner of public address written or uttered. Since his approach to *belles-lettres* was through rhetoric, it follows that rhetorical criticism is at least a preliminary to literary criticism, for it will erect the factual basis for the understanding of the works: will not merely explain allusions and establish dates, but recall the setting, reconstruct the author's own intention, and analyze his method. But the rhetorical inquiry is more than a mere preliminary; it permeates and governs all subsequent interpretation and criticism. For the statesman in letters is a statesman still: compare Burke to Charles Lamb, or even to Montaigne, and it is clear that the public man is in a sense inseparable from his audience. A statesman's wisdom and eloquence are not to be read without some share of his own sense of the body politic, and of the body politic not merely as a construct of thought, but as a living human society. A speech, like a satire, like a comedy of manners, grows directly out of a social situation; it is a man's response to a condition in human affairs. However broadly typical the situation may be when its essential elements are laid bare, it never appears without its coverings. On no plane of thought—philosophical, literary, political—is Burke to be understood without reference to the great events in America, India, France, which evoked his eloquence; nor is he to be understood without reference to the state of English society. (It is this last that is lacking in Grierson's essay: the page of comment on Burke's qualities in actual debate wants its supplement in some account of the House of Com-

¹ *Life of William Ewart Gladstone*, II, 589-90.

mons and the national life it represented. Perhaps the latter is the more needful to a full understanding of the abiding excellence in Burke's pages.) Something of the spirit of Morley's chapter on Cobden, and more of the spirit of the social historian (which Morley has in other parts of the biography) is necessary to the literary critic in dealing with the statesman who is also a man of letters.

In the case of Burke, then, one of the functions of rhetorical criticism is as a preliminary, but an essential and governing preliminary, to the literary criticism which occupies itself with the permanent values of wisdom and of eloquence, of thought and of beauty, that are found in the works of the orator.

Rhetorical criticism may also be regarded as an end in itself. Even Burke may be studied from that point of view alone. Fox and Cobden and the majority of public speakers are not to be regarded from any other. No one will offer Cobden's works a place in pure literature. Yet the method of the great agitator has a place in the history of his times. That place is not in the history of *belles-lettres*; nor is it in the literary history which is a "survey of the life of a people as expressed in their writings." The idea of "writings" is a merely mechanical one; it does not really provide a point of view or a method; it is a book-maker's cloak for many and diverse points of view. Such a compilation as the *Cambridge History of American Literature*, for example, in spite of the excellence of single essays, may not unjustly be characterized as an uneven commentary on the literary life of the country and as a still more uneven commentary on its social and political life. It may be questioned whether the scant treatment of public men in such a compilation throws light either on the creators of pure literature, or on the makers of rhetorical discourse, or on the life of the times.

Rhetorical criticism lies at the boundary of politics (in the broadest sense) and literature; its atmosphere is that of the public life,¹ its tools are those of literature, its concern is with the ideas of the people as influenced by their leaders. The effective wielder of public discourse, like the military man, belongs to social and political history because he is one of its makers. Like the soldier, he has an art of his own which is the source of his power; but the soldier's art is distinct from the life which his conquests affect. The rhetorician's

¹ For a popular but suggestive presentation of the background of rhetorical discourse, see J. A. Spender, *The Public Life*, New York, 1925.

art represents a natural and normal process within that life. It includes the work of the speaker, of the pamphleteer, of the writer of editorials, and of the sermon maker. It is to be thought of as the art of popularization. Its practitioners are the Huxleys, not the Darwins, of science; the Jeffersons, not the Lockes and the Rousseaus, of politics.

Of late years the art of popularization has received a degree of attention: propaganda and publicity have been words much used; the influence of the press has been discussed; there have been some studies of public opinion. Professor Robinson's *Humanizing of Knowledge*¹ is a cogent statement of the need for popularization by the instructed element in the state, and of the need for a technique in doing so. But the book indicates, too, how little is known of the methods its author so earnestly desires to see put to use. Yet ever since Homer's day men have woven the web of words and counsel in the face of all. And ever since Aristotle's day there has been a mode of analysis of public address. Perhaps the preoccupation of literary criticism with "style" rather than with composition in the large has diverted interest from the more significant problem. Perhaps the conventional categories of historical thought have helped to obscure the problem: the history of thought, for example, is generally interpreted as the history of invention and discovery, both physical and intellectual. Yet the history of the thought of the people is at least as potent a factor in the progress of the race. True, the popular thought may often represent a resisting force, and we need not marvel that the many movements of a poet's mind more readily capture the critic's attention than the few and uncertain movements of that Leviathan, the public mind. Nor is it surprising that the historians tend to be occupied with the acts and the motives of leaders. But those historians who find the spirit of an age in the total mass of its literary productions, as well as all who would tame Leviathan to the end that he shall not threaten civilization, must examine more thoroughly than they as yet have done the interactions of the inventive genius, the popularizing talent, and the public mind.

¹ New York, 1923.

THE RHYTHM OF ORATORICAL PROSE

WAYLAND MAXFIELD PARRISH

THE rhythm of spoken and written prose has received attention from students in several different fields. First, there are the ancient critics and rhetoricians, principally Aristotle, Quintilian, Cicero, and Longinus, who attempted to analyze the sonorous roll of ancient oratory. Second, there is a host of modern literary critics—Bulwer-Lytton, Stevenson, Saintsbury, Quiller-Couch, and many more—who have tried to give an account of the elusive beauty of English essay style, as found, chiefly, in the writings of such masters as Pater, De Quincey, and Browne. Third, there is a considerable number of philologists, notably Sievers and Zielinski in Germany, Elton and Clark in England, and Croll in America, who are concerned largely with tracing the origin and determining the structure of prose cadences or clause endings. Fourth, several modern physicists have recorded and measured the voice in reading, to discover what it actually does. Fifth, the psychologists have tried to define and measure the effect of rhythm on the ears of trained auditors. Sixth, there are the teachers of elocution and reading, who generally find rhythm an aid to both perspicuity and beauty. And there is a miscellaneous group of dabblers whose contributions are often amusing but seldom enlightening. This paper will attempt to synthesize from these varied materials and viewpoints a coherent explanation of the nature and function of rhythm in spoken discourse.

One condition of this study must be noted. Since oratory is addressed to the public, our interest is in the sounds of words as they are heard by a public gathering. It is not in those fine and delicate rhythms (if any such exist) that are caught only by the sensitive ear of the cultivated. It is not in the appeal that rhythm makes to the inner ear of the reader of a manuscript. And it is not in what rhythm is as determined objectively by the scientist's measurements. Says Bliss Perry: "For that sonority and cadence and balance which con-

stitute a harmonious prose sentence cannot be adequately felt by a possibly illiterate scientist in his laboratory for acoustics."¹ Our interest is in what rhythm seems to be, as it is caught by the common ear.

One cannot go far into the literature of rhythm without meeting widely divergent opinions as to its nature and function. Prose rhythm is said by one to be essentially regular and by another essentially various. According to one the laws by which it is governed are the same as those for poetry; according to another it has a set of laws all its own. Some writers find it highly pleasing to the ear, others consider it a decided fault in composition. Some say it is governed by definite discoverable laws; others that it obeys no law but to be lawless. Two reasons may be hazarded for this divergence of opinion. First, the writers may lack a distinct sense of rhythm. It is a well-established fact that people vary in their ability to perceive rhythm. Some cannot march or dance to music, and many cannot scan poetry. It is reasonable to suppose that some critics who are disturbed with the joy (or pain) of subtle and elusive harmonies are really confused (or annoyed) by a blurred conception of what because of their constitutional defect they never can feel distinctly. It would be interesting to know what scores some of our modern critics would make in the Seashore test for rhythmic sense. Certainly the ability to pass such a test is necessary in one who is to do intelligent work in this field. Second, the disagreements among the investigators may be due to the fact that when they write of rhythm they do not all have the same thing in mind. In writings on this subject definitions are rare. By most literary writers prose rhythm is a term used loosely to cover any effect which is found to be pleasing to the ear. In dictionaries it is defined as "harmony of language," a "harmonious flow of words." This is characteristically vague. The element of rhythm which is least distinct in the mind of the literary critic is the element which the physicist and the psychologist recognize as the very essence of rhythm. To them rhythm is a recurrence of effects or perceptions at *regular* intervals, and it is especially important for us to understand that the recurrence be regular. The mere recurrence of accents in verse or prose means nothing. Since we speak an accented language accents *must* recur. It is their recurrence at regular intervals that makes rhythm. Furthermore, in oratory we

¹ *A Study of Poetry*, Boston, 1920, p. 158.

can consider only regularity *in time*. Some forms of verse make an appeal to the eye through a regularity in arrangement on the page, but the appeal of oratorical prose rhythm is to the ear only and hence to be considered as a regularity in time. Let us say, then, that for this essay oratorical prose rhythm is defined as *a rhetorical device which consists of effects repeated at regular intervals in time, and is intended to give distinction to style or pleasure to the audience.*

This helps to clear the ground. There are legitimate rhetorical devices for giving pleasure or distinction which do not come under this definition. For instance, the combination of euphonious words of poetic connotation such as "gorgeous ensign" gives us a pleasure which we are apt to attribute mistakenly to rhythm. In the analysis of his favorite prose passages Saintsbury¹ repeatedly refers to beautiful syllables, beautiful letters, vowel music, contrast, balance, apt epithets, adaptation of sound to sense—all as contributing to rhythmic effect. All these things do contribute to "harmony of language," but not to rhythm as here defined; unless, of course, they are repeated at sensibly regular intervals in time.

Nor are alliteration and assonance to be considered rhythmical unless they conform to this principle of regularity. For instance, in the passage from *Isaiah* quoted by Saintsbury, "Arise, shine, for thy light is come," the repetition of the long *i* is rhythmical only if in the process of reading the sound recurs after equal intervals of time. So, too, asyndeton may or may not embody rhythm. There is obvious advantage in isolating regularity as one feature of prosodic harmony in order to determine if possible its nature and function.

The reproductions in English of the cadence patterns of the Latin *cursus* will be considered rhythmical only in so far as they conform to this requirement of regularity. They have, for the most part, a "trochaic roll" which entitles them to be considered, as they will be later, as forms of metre. Cadences, or clause endings, seem to have received more attention from scholars than any other form of prose rhythm. They receive no special treatment in this paper because their possibilities seem to the writer to have been exhausted by the studies of Clark, Croll, and Elton. Croll² attempts to find the patterns of the *cursus* in English prose, but he allows so many varia-

¹ *A History of English Prose Rhythms*, London, 1912.

² "The Cadence of English Oratorical Prose," *Studies in Philology*, XVI (1919), 1.

tions that the original patterns become obscured. Elton¹ attempts to chart the "native" cadences but admits that "their number becomes hardly manageable." It is significant, moreover, that none of the examples cited by these writers is taken from oratory.

It should be noted, also, that mere mechanical repetition which is accidental or unnoticed, and mere monotony and singsong are eliminated by our definition because they do not give pleasure or distinction.

In the light of this definition we may now examine more closely some of the controversial points mentioned above. Most writers, ancient and modern, treat rhythm as syllabic, as a matter of the arrangement of heavy and light syllables, but there is marked disagreement among them as to whether this arrangement is regular or metrical, as in verse. Representative opinions will be quoted—first of those who contend that the rhythm of prose is not the same as the rhythm of poetry:

Aristotle, *Rhetoric* III, viii: "Prose must therefore have rhythm but not metre; for then it will be poetry. This rhythm however must not be precise; and precision will be avoided if it is carried only to a certain point. . . . Metrical prose has an artificial air and distracts the attention."

Cicero, *De Oratore* III, xlv: "On this head it is remarkable that if a verse is formed by the composition of words it is a fault."

Quintilian, *Institutes* IX, iv: "Prose will not stoop to be measured by taps of the finger. . . . Verse is always in some degree uniform and flows in one stream, while the language of prose unless it be varied, offends by monotony, and convicts itself of affectation. . . . We must avoid what is metrical. . . . To lay down one law for every species of composition is a sort of versification (the very suspicion of which ought to be avoided) and produces weariness and satiety."

Saintsbury, *A History of English Prose Rhythm*, p. 478: "The great principle of foot arrangement in prose, and of prose rhythm, is variety."

Stevenson, *On Some Technical Elements of Style in Literature*: "Each phrase of each sentence should be so artfully compounded out of long and short . . . as to gratify the sensual ear. And of this the ear is the sole judge. It is impossible to lay down laws. [Prose phrases] obey no law but to be lawless and yet to please."²

Quiller-Couch, *On the Art of Writing*: "I define verse to be a record in metre and rhythm, prose to be a record which, dispensing with metre (ab-

¹ "English Prose Numbers," *Essays and Studies by Members of the English Association*, IV (1913), 29.

² *The Works of Robert Louis Stevenson*, New York, 1897-98, XXII, 252-3.

horring it indeed) uses rhythm laxly, preferring it to be various and unconstrained, so always that it convey a certain pleasure to the ear."¹

Opposed to such authorities as these are the following, who hold that prose rhythm is essentially the same as verse rhythm, in that it consists of a regular recurrence of accented syllables.

Of Zielinski,² Kirby Smith says: "The fundamental idea of his system, I take it, is the axiom . . . that in so far as conscious rhythm exists in prose, the general laws by which it is governed are those which apply to poetry."³ Zielinski finds that 92% of Cicero's clause endings follow a definite metric pattern.

A. C. Clark, *Prose Rhythm in English*: "The essence, however, of rhythm both in prose and poetry is regularity of beat. . . . In English the trochaic movement pervades the whole sentence and frequently produces the effect of blank verse."⁴

P. Fijn van Draat, *Rhythm in English Prose*: "After a long period of iambs, succeeded by some words in which no rhythm is to be found, we may very well expect to get a dactylic period, to see the iambic measure return a moment later."⁵

Croll (*Op. cit.*, p. 46) finds the set pattern of the *cursus* in clause endings, and speaks of their "trochaic movement."

Elton (*Op. cit.*, p. 53) also finds "bursts of actual metre" in prose as one of the constituents of prose rhythm.

D. S. MacColl, "Rhythm in English Verse, Prose, and Speech," *Essays and Studies by Members of the English Association*, V (1914), 39: "A little investigation will prove that a great deal of prose is written in short stretches of metre."

Here is a very plain contradiction, and there is on both sides opinion that is entitled to the highest respect. *Metrical* rhythm is definite and measured. It may be generally perceived and communicated. Have those who deny to it a place in prose anything to substitute that is equally definite and equally communicable? Have they any different definition of the rhythm of prose that is acceptable? Some of them despair of ever finding a satisfactory definition. Quiller-Couch says that the rhythms of prose are so lax and various that

¹ New York, 1916, p. 64.

² *Das Clauselgesetz in Ciceros Reden*, Leipzig, 1904.

³ *American Journal of Philology*, XXV (1904), 460.

⁴ Oxford, 1913, pp. 8, 18.

⁵ Heidelberg, 1910, p. 5.

he questions whether any explanation is possible.¹ After reading Saintsbury's *History of English Prose Rhythm* he is left doubting. He says, "What madman, then, will say, 'Thus, or thus far shalt thou go, to a prose thus invented and thus, with its free rhythms, after three hundred years working on the imagination of Englishmen? Or who shall determine its range, whether of thought or of music?'" Stevenson says, "It is impossible to lay down laws."

Others, not so hopeless, have attempted a variety of schemes and measurements. Aristotle recommends the pæon; and this has the highly desired merit of being both regular and various, for while it consists always of four syllables, the long syllable is not confined to one place within the foot. But obviously rhythmic English prose does not and cannot consist of pæons. Quintilian is somewhat incoherent, and finally seems inclined to give up the problem when he says, "A person . . . may act better under the guidance of nature than of art." Cicero contributes nothing helpful except his idea of "strokes at equal intervals," which will be mentioned later. Saintsbury groups syllables arbitrarily into twenty-nine varieties of feet, but this grouping has no law or principle except his own caprice. Joshua Steele² worked out an elaborate system of scansion for both prose and poetry, making liberal use of the rests employed to aid rhythm in music; but his method was highly artificial and purely arbitrary, as he learned to his chagrin when he compared his scansion of Hamlet's soliloquy with David Garrick's reading of the lines. Lipsky counts the number of accents per phrase and the number of syllables between accents, but he announces no conclusions that aid in determining the nature of rhythm.³ Patterson feels a definite throbbing underneath the flow of syllables, but it seems to have nothing to do with the arrangement or accent of the syllables. His ideas of retardation and syncopation would seem to be valuable contributions, but he does not make them contribute anything of much value toward an explanation of prose rhythm.⁴ It seems safe to conclude that if prose rhythm is to be considered syllabic but not metrical, there has not yet been evolved any method of analysis or scansion that is generally accepted or generally acceptable.

On the other hand, Zielinski found that Cicero's orations do

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 66.

² *Prosodia Rationalis*, London, 1779.

³ *Rhythm as a Distinguishing Characteristic of Prose Style*, New York, 1907.

⁴ *The Rhythm of Prose*, New York, 1916.

have in the *clausulæ* the regularity of verse. And Clark points out that Cicero and Quintilian failed to grasp the principles by which they were themselves influenced. He says the essence of rhythm in both prose and poetry is regularity of beat. Regularity and variety are contradictory terms. If prose rhythm is "various" and "lawless" then surely it is hardly rhythm. If, as Saintsbury says, in the famous opening sentence of the finale of Browne's *Urn Burial* "no two identical feet ever follow each other, not so much as on a single occasion," then this "finest phrase in English prose" owes its charm to something other than rhythm. Prose does, as Elton points out, contain "bursts of actual metre" which is the same metre that is found in poetry. The difference is not of quality but of quantity. As Van Draat says, "In prose we have iambic and dactylic periods alternating with nonrhythmical periods." And MacColl says, "A little investigation will prove that a great deal of prose is written in short stretches of metre."

Examples of such metre in standard oratorical selections are not difficult to find:

You may . . . traffic and barter with every little pitiful German Prince that sells/ and sends/ his sub/jects to/ the sham/bles of a foreign prince. (Chatham, Address to the Throne.)

Then/ ensued/ a scene/ of woe/ the like/ of which/ no eye/ had seen/ no heart/ conceived/ and which/ no tongue/ can ad/equately tell. (Burke, Nabob of Arcot's Debts.)

Thus the law . . . goes up to the fountain of human agency, and arraigns/ the lurk/ing mis/chief of/ the soul. (Erskine, In Behalf of Lord George Gordon.)

Do we mean/ to submit/ to the meas/ures of Par/liament, Boston Port bill and all? (Webster, Supposed Speech of John Adams.)

In such a land he is doubly and trebly guilty who, except in some extreme case, disturbs/ the so/ber rule/ of law/ and or/der. (Wendell Phillips, Scholar in a Republic.)

Many writers who insist that prose rhythm must be various admit that lines of metre may occur in prose, but find them highly objectionable. Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian have already been quoted on this point. W. D. Scott says, "It is æsthetically displeasing to have too much made of rhythm in reading prose and poetry."¹ Wil-

¹ *The Psychology of Public Speaking*, Philadelphia, 1907, p. 145.

liam Thompson is quoted by Omond as saying, "Metre may occur in prose but it must not be perceptible as in verse."¹ Longinus found metre particularly obnoxious. He says, "Such abuse of rhythm is sure to savor of coxcombry and petty affectation, and grows tiresome in the highest degree by a monotonous sameness of tone." Yet Longinus points the answer to this objection when he says that "when sublimity sheds its light all round the sophistries of rhetoric they become invisible." Perhaps the offensiveness of metre in prose is due to the bareness of the thought that accompanies it. Rhythm or metre may be accidental. It may be present in any piece of plain prose. These phrases occurred in the news items of a college daily:

Today/ it was/ report/ed that/ machine/ guns had/ been brought.

Chairmen of the canvassing committees/ expressed/ themselves/ as high/ly grat/ified.

It is doubtful if such metre is noticed by one reader in a hundred. Such passages do not impress us as rhythmical because they lack the concomitants which lift rhythm into the realm of eloquence, or poetry, or what Longinus called "sublimity." These necessary concomitants are such things as poetic diction, grandeur of thought, intense feeling, rhetorical excellence. "It is the elevation of ideas," says Bliss Perry, "the nobility and beauty of feeling, as discerned by the trained literary sense, which makes the final difference between enduring prose harmonies and the mere tinkling of the 'musical glasses.'"² Omond in reviewing William Thompson's *Basis of English Rhythm* says, "he well knows that æsthetic effects depend partly on non-rhythmical factors—on warmth and color, the qualities of vowels and consonants, the instinctive modulations of tone."³ Coleridge said the pleasure of metre was conditional, since it was dependent on the appropriateness of the thoughts and expressions to which the form was superadded. We do not want poetic form unless we have poetic thought. And we do not look for or find poetic form ordinarily unless poetic thought or diction or imagery suggests its presence. Metre occurring alone, then, is either unnoticed, or, if noticed, offensive or silly. Whether noticed or not, it does not, of course, give pleasure or distinction, and hence fails in the true function of rhythm.

¹ *Metrical Rhythms*, Tunbridge Wells, 1905, p. 6.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 158.

³ *Op. cit.*, p. 14.

Further light is thrown on the cause of the tiresomeness of metre by Ruckmich's studies in the Cornell psychological laboratory.¹ One of his conclusions is: "There is usually a marked change in the affective tone throughout a typical period of rhythmical perception, from slight unpleasantness before the rhythm is grasped through pleasantness when it is thoroughly perceived, to unpleasantness when it continues without change." If rhythm is to be pleasing, then, it must be broken at frequent intervals. It should occur in snatches. If the application of this principle be looked for in passages of oratorical prose, it will be found that very rarely is there so continuous a run as this from President Lowell's address at the inauguration of Livingston Farrand as president of Cornell University:

There is an ever rushing, ever growing stream of youth which in these halls comes upward to the light. It never ceases. Always bright with youthful hope it flows away to gladden and enrich our commonwealth.

Much more typical of oratorical practice is this passage from Burke's *Conciliation*:

It will táke/ its perpét/ual tén/or, it will recéive/ its fi/nal imprés/sion, from the stámp of this véry hóur.

A different form of syllabic rhythm will next be considered. Many writers reject Aristotle's recommendation of the pæon but heartily endorse his principle of diversity in uniformity—rhythm without metre. However, few if any have made a practical concrete application of the principle. Leigh Hunt points the way to a possible method when he shows how Coleridge, in his "Christabel," broke the monotonous singsong of iambic tetrameter verse by "calling to mind the liberties allowed its old musical professors, the minstrels, and dividing it by time instead of by syllables—by the beat of four into which you might get as many syllables as you could, instead of allotting eight syllables to the poor line whatever it might have to say."² In this case "as many syllables as you could" means either two or three for each time beat. That is, the feet of "Christabel" are iambs and anapests indiscriminately mixed. That such freedom does not interfere with rhythm is further evidenced by such highly rhythmical poems as Shelley's "The Cloud" and Kipling's "Dedica-

¹"The Rôle of Kinæsthesia in the Perception of Rhythm," *American Journal of Psychology*, XXIV (1913), 305.

²*What is Poetry?* ed. A. S. Cook, Boston, 1893, p. 58.

tion" to *Barrack Room Ballads*. What happens if four syllables be crowded into a foot occasionally instead of two or three? If Vachel Lindsay's "Congo" be examined it is plain that the occasional use of this longer foot certainly does not *decrease* rhythmic effect. He mixes freely feet of two, three, and four syllables, as in the line,

With a silk/ umbrel/la and the han/dle of a broom.

May we carry this principle farther? Llewellyn Jones says that in these lines from Robert Bridges' "London Snow" (I use his scan-

In/ large white/ flakes/ falling on the/ city/ brown
Stealthily and per/petually/ settling and/ loosely/ lying,

sion), some of the feet have five syllables and some have one. Such lines are rhythmical, he says, because "the accents are at *equal intervals of time apart*."¹ Gummere agrees that the foundation of rhythm is a regular succession of equal time intervals.² Poetic rhythm is aided by line length and by rhyme. If we eliminate these, there remains a rhythm of "time beats," of heavy syllables at equal intervals of time, separated from each other by varying numbers of light syllables, which is common to both prose and poetry (of the "London Snow" type). There seems to be no reasonable doubt that this rhythm does occur in spoken prose, even in very ordinary prose. It is heard, for instance, in the speeches of college debaters, and it is often reinforced by strokes of the hand or fist. These phrases were spoken by students in public contests with the marked syllables at sensibly equal intervals of time:

The government has been able and willing

There should be no suggestion of an entangling alliance

Has proven its ability to stimulate such initiative.

It is apparent at once that there is little in these phrases when written to suggest the rhythm which the speakers put into them. Can we be sure then, in reading the speeches of Burke and Webster, that we are reproducing from the printed page the "time beat" rhythms of voices long silent? We cannot, of course, be sure; we can only guess. Examples of fairly probable rhythms are rather frequent. The following are typical:

¹"A Poet's Prosody," *The Freeman*, IV (1921-22), 499.

²*Handbook of Poetics*, Boston, 1885, p. 134.

It réconciles superiôriety of pówer with the féelings of mén and estâblishes sólíd cónfidence on the foundâtions of afféction and grâtitude. (Chatham, on Removing Troops from Boston.)

The fréeholders of Éngland are redúced to a cóndition báser than the péasantry of Póland. (Chatham, on the Case of John Wilkes.)

Have shâken the pillars of a commérçial émpire that circled the whóle glóbe. (Burke, on American Taxation.)

A third variety of rhythm in prose is that of longer periods—phrases, clauses, or whole sentences. Cicero and Quintilian both mention “periods” in prose but it is doubtful if they had in mind a regular recurrence of similar periods. Bulwer-Lytton speaks of the pauses which aid the thought by serving as checks to compress words.¹ Professor F. N. Scott makes an interesting contribution in his “upward and downward glide” of the thought.² Lipsky speaks of a rhythm of thought distinguishable if not separable from that of language (phonetic rhythm), and cites the parallelisms of the Hebrew Bible. He suggests as another form of “thought rhythm” the “repetition of the same form of phrase with different but allied meanings,” and cites this example with its succession of prepositional phrases, “distant field in the pale dusk of a brilliant day of early June.”³ Sapir has something of the kind in mind when he speaks of periods determined by pause, by rising and falling of the voice, by alliteration, etc., though he clouds his meaning somewhat by the invention of such terms as “intercrossing rhythms,” “non-synchronous verse patterns,” and “rhyme-sectioning.”⁴

No one seems to have described clearly what very plainly occurs in oratory, namely, a repetition of rhetorically similar phrases, clauses, or sentences, sometimes accompanied by asyndeton. Here is an example from Chatham’s speech on an Address to the Throne.

I have laid before you the ruin of your power, the disgrace of your reputation, the pollution of your discipline, the contamination of your morals, the complication of calamities, foreign and domestic, that overwhelms your sinking country.

¹ “Rhythm in Prose,” *Carxtonia*, Leipzig, 1864, p. 107.

² “The Scansion of Prose Rhythm,” *Publications of the Modern Language Association*, XX (1905), 707.

³ *Op. cit.*

⁴ “The Musical Foundations of Verse,” *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, XX (1921), 213.

Sometimes such a passage will have also one or both types of syllabic rhythm discussed above, as in this passage in Burke's speech on Mr. Fox's East India bill:

They are stamped/ by the faith/ of the Kings;/ they are stamped/ by the faith/ of Parl/iament; they have been bought for money, for m^oney h^onestly and f^airly p^aid; they have been b^ought for v^aluable c^onsider^ations, over and over again.

Doubtless there are other rhythms in oratory—rhythms of melodic phrases, rhythms of larger thought units, rhythms of recurring words or sounds or ideas. But the three types here discussed are submitted as the most common and most easily measurable of oratorical rhythms. These may be recapitulated as (1) metrical rhythm, in regular feet as in verse, but rarely continued for more than three or four successive feet; (2) syllabic stress-rhythm, in which syllables are heavily stressed at regular time-intervals, with a varying number of unstressed or lightly stressed syllables between; (3) rhythm of grammatical units, in which recurring phrase-patterns or sentence-patterns give the effect of regularity.

Ruckmich found, it will be recalled, that our greatest pleasure in the perception of rhythm comes just at the moment when we feel that a rhythm has been established; that is, after the unit has been perceived two or three times. And Van Draat pointed out that metric runs seldom continue long but change from iambic to anapest, or are broken by phrases without rhythm, or, we might add, by sections of "time beat" rhythm. It is in these considerations, perhaps, that we may best seek an explanation for those "elusive harmonies" which puzzle some critics of beautiful prose, so far, that is, as those harmonies are really due to rhythm. If the rhythm ceases just as we are about to grasp it, if the pattern disappears just as we are about to recognize it and attune ourselves to it, or if it changes quickly to a different pattern, there is indeed created a teasing elusiveness that might well be said to defy analysis.

And this is just what does happen. Let us take the passage from De Quincey which Saintsbury says still charms him after fifty years of close familiarity with it, "a magazine of the secrets of rhythm," which "illustrates supereminently that doctrine of Variety."

And her eyes/ if they were e/ver seen/ would be nei/ther sweet/ nor subtle;/ no man/ could read/ their story;/ they would be found/ filled with

perishing/ dreams/ and with wrecks/ of forgotten/ delirium. (Saintsbury's scansion.)

Here, it is true, "there is not so much as a blank verse," but there is metre, as Clark points out. A whole pentameter is not necessary to establish rhythm. It is possible to point out in this sentence four rhythmic groups, two of three accents each and two of four:

her eyes/ if they/ were ev/er seen

would pass as acceptable iambic tetrameter ;

would be neith/er sweet/ nor sub/tle

might be the next line in the same stanza of verse ;

fóund filled with périshing dréams

would probably be read by most people with the four heavy syllables approximately equidistant in time ;

and with wrecks/ of forgot/ten delir/ium

contains three successive anapests. With scansion thus suggested, these rhythms are plainly evident—too evident perhaps for a full enjoyment of the beauty of the passage. But to one who has not had the patterns pointed out, may not their presence, dimly felt but not clearly apprehended, bring a teasing sense of haunting elusiveness?

It is said that oratorical rhythms are more obvious than those in other prose. Nevertheless, instances of subtly changing rhythmic patterns are to be found occasionally in some of the best speeches. Here are sentences from one paragraph of Burke's Speech on Conciliation with America ; the metric groups as the writer hears them are enclosed in brackets, and the heavy "time beat" accents marked :

My hold on the colonies is in the close affection [which grows/ from com/mon names/, from com/mon blood,] from similar privileges and égal protéction. [These/ are ties/ which though light/ as air/ are as strong/ as links/ of iron.] Slavery they can have anywhere—it is [a weed/ that grows/ in ev/ery soil.] [They may have/ it from Spain;/ they may have/ it from Prus/sia.] But until you become lost to all feeling of your true interest and your natural dignity, freédom they can háve from nóne but yóu.

Here is another example, from Webster's Reply to Hayne :

[When mine eyes/ shall be turned/ to behold/ for the last/] time the sun in heaven, may I not see him shining on the bróken and dishónored frag-ments of a ónce glórious únion ; on Státes dissévered, discórdant, belligerent ; on a lánd rént with cívil féuds, [or drenched,/ it may be,/ in frater/nal blood!]

A final word may be added concerning the place and function of rhythm in prose. Herbert Spencer says rhythmical structure is an idealization of the language of emotion, which is known to be more or less metrical. Since speech rhythm is almost universally associated with expression of the speaker's emotion, and with the arousing or soothing of the emotions of the audience, it is therefore appropriate and natural in eulogies, occasional addresses, and perorations, where the aim is to stir or soothe the emotions. On the other hand, it is inappropriate and frequently a cause for suspicion in a speech whose aim is the communication of ideas. Longinus warns us that an "over-rhythmical passage does not affect the hearer by the meaning of the words but merely by their cadence." True, Herbert Spencer says the pleasure we receive from verse "is ascribable to the comparative ease with which words metrically arranged can be recognized" (Does he mean understood?), and "if the syllables be rhythmically arranged, the mind may economize its energies by anticipating the attention required for each syllable."¹ Lipsky says experiments show that much rhythm conduces to speed in reading, that it indicates that a writer has possession of a complex thought, and that there is little rhythm in the writings of one whose thoughts come in dribbles. And Bulwer-Lytton thought that rhythm should be cultivated not only for embellishment but also for perspicuity. Still, Longinus's warning is worth noting, and Professor Cabot in his *What Men Live By* has some significant remarks on the "thought-quenching power" of rhythm. Writers on elocution and expression who commend rhythm as an aid to intelligibility do not mean rhythm as here defined; they generally confuse it with rate of utterance or distribution of pauses.

It was pointed out above that rhythm occurring in plain flat prose was either unnoticed or offensive. Just as metre alone does not make poetry, so rhythm alone does not make distinguished prose. What, then, is the function of rhythm in prose? It will scarcely be questioned that a style may have distinction or beauty without rhythm. Saintsbury's *History of English Prose Rhythm* contains a large assortment of beautiful prose which, he claims, is not regular but "various," and hence not rhythmical in the sense here meant. Many of his passages do not seem scannable by the methods here discussed. Metaphor, poetic diction, euphony, rhetorical structure, emotion, lofty

¹ *The Philosophy of Style*, ed. F. N. Scott, Boston, 1892, p. 33.

thought—all may give distinction without the aid of rhythm. Rhythm alone without the aid of one or more of these accompaniments does not give distinction. Its only use is in conjunction with other devices, its only value to add somewhat to their effect. But in this purely auxiliary capacity it does add greatly to distinction in style, much more to spoken than to written style. To break into rhythmic utterance, especially of the time beat variety, is an almost universal tendency among speakers whenever they are moved by strong but controlled feeling. As Gummere says, "Rhythm is not artificial, not an invention; it lies at the heart of things, and in rhythm the noblest emotions find their noblest expression."¹

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 135.

PHONETICS AND ELOCUTION

LEE S. HULTZÉN

IF we accept the New English Dictionary definition of *elocution*, "the art of public speaking so far as it regards delivery, pronunciation, tones, and gestures; manner or style of oral delivery," the science of phonetics may be said to fall completely within the field of elocution. The materials of phonetics are speech sounds, the sounds of more or less formal or public speaking as well as the sounds of informal conversation. The sounds of public speech, whether delivered extemporaneously or from memory, are the immediate materials of elocution. And since, as Sweet observes, "nothing can shake the fundamental principle that all elocution, however, far it may be removed from the language of ordinary life, must be based ultimately on it,"¹ any study of the sounds of any kind of speech is significant for elocution.

But this natural kinship of elocution and phonetics has not been apparent in the publishers' lists.² Except for the philological investigations not designed for any special application, most of the present body of the science of phonetics has been supplied by those engaged in teaching foreign languages and, to a lesser extent, by physicists and engineers interested in problems of acoustics or of long distance communication. The greater number of books on English phonetics are specially adapted to the teaching of English to foreigners.

As a consequence of this well-nigh complete monopoly of the field of phonetics by those whose special interests lie elsewhere, almost nothing has been done to correlate phonetics and elocution, however obvious the close interrelation of the two subjects must be. Yet much of the phonetic investigation undertaken with some

¹ Henry Sweet, *The Sounds of English*, Oxford, 1910, p. 80.

² Of the more than 250 titles mentioned in the *Liste des Principaux Ouvrages dans lesquels est employé L'Alphabet Phonétique Internationale*, published by the International Phonetic Association in 1922, one only was listed under the classification "Elocution." This book, on voice training, has only one short chapter on phonetics and the use which it makes elsewhere of the international alphabet is quite incidental.

quite different end in view contains material of importance to the student of elocution, and from a consideration of this material and of the correlating principles may be determined many of the needs for further study. Account must also be taken of less recent observations by elocutionists and others—studies which, while never so labeled, must properly be classed as phonetic. Some of these were fully as “scientific” as much of the research of the last forty years.

Although elocution may be considered as including the whole of phonetics, there are two fairly distinct relationships to be kept in mind. That portion of phonetics which is concerned with the analysis of the individual sounds and their combination as occurring in all oral discourse has the same relation to elocution that conversation has to more formal discourse—it is properly an antecedent study or practice. This includes the study of the formation of sounds, questions of pronunciation, standards of pronunciation and deviations from the standard, the analysis and synthesis of the individual sounds, syllabic stress, assimilation, quantity, and such special problems as the theory of plosive consonants. A discussion of this general division of phonetics will not further the special purposes of this essay.

There are, however, certain other aspects of phonetic investigation which have an added significance in their relation to delivery. To be sure, all the phenomena to be observed in public discourse occur also in the casual utterance of language; the difference is largely one of degree. But the difference in degree is quite sufficient to make apparent a special problem in the adaptation of phonetics to the uses of the public speaker. This problem includes various matters not in themselves considered by the phoneticians as constituting a unified portion of the science; the three here to be mentioned are brought together only because of their bearing on elocution. They are: (1) the grouping of sounds in speech, (2) the selection of significant, and the subordination of auxiliary sounds, and (3) intonation.

I

The grouping of sounds in units larger than the word is a characteristic of all spoken language. It is apparent in the most casual utterance, in extemporaneous discourse, and in the most studied interpretation of the masterpieces. Different phoneticians have made use of different principles in analyzing the grouping of sounds and have

used various names for the groups, such as: *breath-groups*, *stress-groups*, *intonation-groups*, etc.,¹ but they are all agreed that the actual phonetic unit is a group of sounds representing one or several, usually several, words. When further distinction is not necessary, the term *word-group*, a literal translation of the much used German *Wortgruppe*, will serve to indicate some kind of grouping without limiting us to any particular theory.

The first significant point is that in speaking we always divide our language into word-groups, not into words. The speaker does not consistently separate each word from the preceding and following words by any physical manifestation.² Because we have been accustomed to hear such speech and have a fairly extensive knowledge of the grammar and vocabulary of our language, we are able readily and easily to distinguish the separate words in conversation or speech; and we do this to the extent that such a distinction is necessary for our comprehension of the thought. If the speaker uses a language with which we are not acquainted, particularly one which does not rely mainly on sounds and constructions similar to those of our language, it is quite impossible to distinguish the words.³ The word may be a unit of meaning; it is not a phonetic unit. The only division actually made in language is that into word-groups.⁴

¹ Perhaps the most generally used term is *breath-group*. See Henry Sweet, *op. cit.*, p. 49; Daniel Jones, *The Pronunciation of English*, Cambridge, 1919, pp. 58-9; Paul Passy, *The Sounds of the French Language*, Oxford, 1913, pp. 23-8; Walter Ripman, *The Sounds of Spoken English and Specimens of English*, New York, 1924, p. 128; *et al.* Ripman, in his *Elements of Phonetics*, adapted from Viëtor's *Kleine Phonetik*, New York, 1918, p. 102, discusses both *breath-groups* and *stress-groups* as being divisions according to different principles and more or less independent of each other. Passy, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-31, considers the *stress-group* a subdivision of the *breath-group*. Sievers, *Grundzüge der Phonetik*, Leipzig, 1893, pp. 232 ff., uses the word *Takte*, as do other German writers, implying a similarity to musical bars; his basis of division is stress, and he refers to the *stress-groups* of Sweet's *Primer of Phonetics*, Oxford, 1890. E. W. Scripture, *The Elements of Experimental Phonetics*, New York, 1902, ch. 10, speaks of *phonetic units*, or *auditory ideas*, basing the division on the density "of the speech-current in consciousness." H. Klinghardt, in Klinghardt und Klemm, *Übungen im englischen Tonfall*, Cöthen, 1920, pp. 24 ff., rejects both the *stress-* and *breath-group* theories and proposes the *intonatorische sinnakt*, a grouping according to the meaning, marked in speaking by the intonation. See also Klinghardt's pamphlet, *Sprechmelodie und Sprechakt*, Marburg in Hessen, [1924].

² Sweet, *The Sounds of English*, p. 49; Passy, *op. cit.*, p. 25; Ripman, *The Sounds of Spoken English*, p. 128.

³ Passy, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-8; Sweet, *Primer of Phonetics*, p. 42.

⁴ Sweet, *Primer of Phonetics*, p. 42; *et al.* Passy, *op. cit.*, p. 28, says that, although the division of sentences into words may correspond to a phonetic phenomenon, "it is impossible to define phonetically the unit of meaning

One such group usually corresponds to several words. Sometimes a group contains only one word; or, on the other hand, a whole sentence, or even more than a sentence, may be contained in one group.¹ The point of division between successive groups is marked in speaking by a pause of longer or shorter duration, or in some other way.²

An example given by Sweet is sufficient to show that there is no division between words in a group. "In such a sentence as *put on your hat*, we hear clearly the recoil or final breath-glide which follows the final *t* of *hat*, but the *t* of *put* runs on to the following vowel without any recoil, exactly as in the single word *putting*."³ It is also clear, as has been often noticed, that *New York* can no more be separated phonetically into two parts than can *Boston* or *Philadelphia*.

That a careful separation of words in connected speech, if indeed possible, is unnatural, no matter what the style of the discourse, is so well recognized as scarcely to deserve mention. The corollary, that the fault which is commonly known as "running the words together" is actually due to the omission or careless enunciation of sounds at the ends or beginnings of words, is as readily apparent. The way in which words are grouped, the factors which determine the length of the group, are, however, significant for the study of elocution as well as for phonetics.

Pauses occur at frequent intervals in speaking. They are made (1) for the purpose of taking breath, (2) for the purpose of making the meaning of the words clearer.⁴ The physiological limitation of the length of breath-groups, imposed upon the speaker by his effective lung capacity, need never interfere with his grouping the words "for the purpose of making the meaning clearer," and so need not be fur-

known as a word." Jespersen, *Lehrbuch der Phonetik*, Leipzig, 1904, p. 202, says, "The word is indeed not a phonetic concept."

¹ Passy, *op. cit.*, p. 24: "... it frequently happens that two or three simple sentences are united in a single breath-group. . . . On the contrary, in formal speech, in teaching, etc., a single elementary sentence may be divided into several groups." According to the theory, "one stress = one group," it is, of course, impossible to include several sentences in one stress-group.

² Breath-groups are separated by pauses, stress-groups not necessarily so. Klinghardt, *Übungen im englischen Tonfall*, pp. 29 ff., says that we frequently distinguish groups of words, not stress-groups, when listening to a speaker who never pauses until he runs out of breath, the grouping being indicated by the intonation.

³ Sweet, *Primer of Phonetics*, p. 42.

⁴ Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 58. *Pauses*, of course, refers to breath-groups. This statement is sufficiently accurate whether or not we are committed to the theory of breath-groups.

ther considered. "Pauses for breath should always be made at points where pauses are necessary or permissible from the point of view of meaning."¹ Practically, then, the length and content of the word-groups must be determined solely by the purpose of making the meaning clearer; the purpose of grouping is to enable the hearer to apprehend the meaning more easily. Passy says we stop, or pause, "because *we speak to be understood*, and we should not be understood if we did not stop."²

The speaker may not, then, group his words haphazardly, may not stop at any chance place to take a breath. The word-groups must correspond with the division of the sense content. The words in any bit of connected discourse contain a succession of ideas, each of which must make an impression upon the auditor. Sometimes there are many words for the expression of a single idea or of a portion of the idea which is sufficiently definite to make an impression; sometimes there is only one word. But in every case each group should contain those words which belong to such a portion of the thought as the mind of the hearer is to grasp at one time. Such a grouping will make understanding easy. In writing, the proper divisions between groups may be, and often are, indicated by punctuation.³ This is by no means always true; frequently there should be more groups than marks of punctuation, almost as frequently fewer. Moreover the same written words may often be arranged into quite different groups by different speakers under different circumstances. But any one group should always correspond with the expression of a single idea or such a portion of the idea as the mind of the hearer may seize upon.

It was because groupings according to stress very frequently do not correspond with groupings according to the meaning and because breath-groups do not necessarily so correspond (although Passy says that they should), that Klinghardt considered both these theories unsatisfactory and called the word-group a *sinntakt*, a sense-group, which, he says, is marked in speaking by the intonation.⁴ Similarly,

¹ Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

² Passy, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

³ Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 59; Passy, *op. cit.*, p. 24: "A breath-group corresponds with the expression of a single idea, or, in other words, with a simple sentence." Passy immediately modifies this statement, *V. supra*, p. 236 n. Probably sentences which, not being altogether simple in idea even though grammatically so, are divided into two or more groups are the rule rather than the exception.

⁴ Klinghardt und Klemm, *op. cit.*, pp. 24 ff.

Scripture used the term *auditory idea* as synonymous with his phonetic unit.¹ So, too, Professor Winans, considering the problem as a teacher of public speaking rather than as a phonetician, uses the term *phrase* to indicate a group of words expressing one idea, and emphasizes the fact that, in any given case, the action of the mind determines the limits of the phrase—or word-group.²

In ordinary conversation such grouping as is necessary—of course the less important the ideas expressed, the less necessary is any accurate grouping—more or less takes care of itself. But even in the most informal speaking that might be included in elocution, it cannot be assumed that there will naturally be good grouping. As Jones says, "Untrained speakers often arrange their breath-groups badly, taking breath and making other pauses in wrong places."³ Perhaps a speaker can best make sure of accurate divisions of his thought by retaining upon the platform what Professor Winans calls "these elements of the mental state of live conversation: (1) *Full realization of the content of your words as you utter them*, and (2) *a lively sense of communication*."⁴

Elocution is also undoubtedly concerned with the manner in which this grouping of words is manifested physically: by stress or by breath, that is by pauses, or by intonation or in some other way; for, as Klinghardt says, only such a division of sentences into groups as is actually audible can be approved.⁵ This problem is far from being settled. Jespersen's statement in 1904, "The idea of the word group is something with which phonetics of the future will have to be concerned; but until now the investigation of this matter has scarcely begun and a serviceable theory has not yet been proposed,"⁶ was indorsed by Klinghardt in 1920. It does not seem unreasonable to suggest that the matter is also of concern to elocution, or at least that it is one of the more important phonetic problems which have a direct bearing on elocution.

¹ Scripture, *op. cit.*, pp. 126 ff.

² J. A. Winans, *Public Speaking*, New York, 1917, p. 425.

³ Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

⁴ Winans, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

⁵ Klinghardt und Klemm, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

⁶ Jespersen, *op. cit.*, p. 203; quoted by Klinghardt, *Übungen im englischen Tonfall*, p. 24.

II

One of the more important matters which should be included in that portion of phonetics properly prerequisite to elocution is gradation. Henry Sweet found fault with elocutionists because "They are seldom content with attacking vulgarisms and provincialisms; they make war on principle on all colloquialisms, although, of course, they find it impossible to get rid of them in practice. They ignore gradation and the obscuration of unstressed vowels; the general result of which is that the pupil is forced to acquire an artificial elocutionary language distinct from that of everyday life."¹ Whether or not this accusation is justified, the implication that gradation has some meaning in elocution is of considerable moment.

That vowels are less distinctly pronounced in some places than in others; that unstressed vowels tend to become the neutral *e*; that the careful pronunciation of the original vowel in such a position cannot add distinctness to the speech and is sure to result at best in giving it an appearance of artificiality, at worst in complete misunderstanding—this from the phoneticians² is only a scientific confirmation of what is constantly brought to the attention of anyone concerned with elocution. In all speaking, however formal it may be, there must be no such attempt to be careful as will ignore this phenomenon of gradation, which is characteristic of our spoken language. Distinct and careful utterance does not mean pronouncing the strong forms, *a* or *o*, where the good usage of conversation prescribes the indefinite vowel *e*. This is another corollary of Sweet's dictum that all elocution must be based ultimately on the language of ordinary life, or, as he expresses it in the same chapter, "The truth is that we cannot make words more distinct by disguising them."

The observance of gradation, or of strong and weak forms, is important if a speaker wishes to avoid the appearance of artificiality, yet the study of this aspect of speech sounds belongs rather with those problems of pronunciation with which we are not here specially concerned. However true it may be that attention to this particular

¹ Sweet, *The Sounds of English*, pp. 77-8.

² Sweet, *The Sounds of English*, pp. 65 ff., also pp. 76 ff.; Ripman, *The Sounds of Spoken English*, pp. 106 ff.; J. S. Kenyon, *American Pronunciation*, Ann Arbor, Mich., 1924, pp. 144-59; *et al.*

characteristic of our language is an ever present need of elocution, it is mentioned here chiefly as an introduction to an important phase of elocution which is analogous, but for which there seems to be no accepted term. Not only are there many weak forms of words and unstressed vowel sounds, the strengthening of which results in obscuring the meaning; there are also throughout all speaking less significant portions of the flow of speech sound which cannot be made as prominent as the significant portions without upsetting the sense pattern of the discourse.

We may say generally that almost all the meaning of a speech is carried by a comparatively few significant portions of the flow of sound. An auditor is able to reconstruct an idea which is actually represented by many successive sounds, if he hears only those sounds which carry the meaning and hears them in their proper relation to each other. Further, even if he hears all the sounds, his comprehension of the idea is greatly facilitated when the significant sounds are made prominent.

Again to take advantage of the investigations of a phonetician who has not been primarily interested in elocution, we find this matter treated by Professor Liddell in a work designed to assist telephone engineers.¹ He finds that speech audition is so selective that the hearer will consciously perceive only a part of the speech gesture and will himself supply a portion of the image.

This selective process is especially active in audition. For instance, if one intent on writing, is sitting in a room containing a clock ticking seconds, . . . he will not hear the clock ticks unless a time idea turns his attention to the clock; then he will hear the sound waves made by the successive ticks clearly and strongly. But all the while his ear has been receiving these sound sensations over and over again. So it is with speech-sound waves; when we listen to them as a means of understanding the conceptual processes of the speaker, we focus those elements which are like the constant speech-gesture images we habitually associate with the conceptual process which the context leads us to expect is in the speaker's mind, and pay little attention to the others.²

Scripture states that, "In all probability the most prominent features of a phonetic unit are first perceived and the details are gradually filled in."³ We select the words of the speaker from the

¹ Mark H. Liddell, *The Physical Characteristics of Speech Sound*, Bulletin No. 16 of The Engineering Experiment Station, Purdue University, 1924.

² *Ibid.*, p. 22.

³ Scripture, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

number of sounds making a claim upon our attention; we pay attention to only a portion of the characteristics of the sounds he is uttering; we perceive fairly quickly the most prominent sounds; only after perceiving the prominent sounds of a word-group do we fill in the details—and probably as a rule do not fill in all the least significant details actually represented by sounds. Thus if a speaker says something about *the man* where the context would lead us to expect *the man* and not *a man* or *any man*, it is probable that we perceive at once the idea *man* and do not much take into account the modification of that idea represented by *the*.¹ So, to various degrees, with other less significant sounds. It may easily be observed that incorrect pronunciations are not nearly so noticeable in the less significant words as in those which carry most of the meaning.² That it is possible to fill in as much of the subordinate detail as is necessary from a perception of the important sounds in proper relation to each other, we notice whenever we listen to a play or a speech under such difficulties that we can hear only the emphasized parts of what is said but are able to reconstruct for ourselves almost the whole. We do this more easily and accurately when the speaker makes the really significant parts of his speech prominent.

Professor Liddell has more to say about the modification of the sounds of words permissible in speaking:

Again, if the heard constants of a given speech-sound wave train are only similar to and not identical with those expected by the hearer, he will focus the like series of speech-gesture images which he habitually associates with the expected concept series and ignore the difference.

Speech audition, therefore, is a peculiar form of selective auditory sensation which separates from the actual sensational experience certain constant elements of the impinging sound-waves and associates them with conceptual meaning. The multitudinous variations characteristic of individual voices are only focused when the hearer is identifying the personality of the speaker; that end once accomplished they are largely ignored. Moreover, these con-

¹ See Scripture, *op. cit.*, Part 2, especially ch. 10, on the perception of speech. It would seem impossible to separate the consideration of the sound of a word from the consideration of its idea, so far as the relation of the word to speaker or hearer is concerned. (Ch. 10, p. 132.)

² Scripture, *op. cit.*, pp. 131-2, cites some experiments with mutilated words, which, although not bearing directly on the point, seem to support this view, *e.g.*, "5. The position most favorable for correct perception is at the end of the sentence," that is, when the idea of the sentence is already almost completely in mind.

stants often vary, . . . owing to carelessness or peculiar speech habits. The question then arises, how far can these constants vary without destroying the intelligibility of the speech sound?

This question can be answered only by a series of physical experiments based upon a knowledge of the standard forms of a given language, as spoken by the majority of the persons who employ it for the higher forms of conceptual thinking.

The history of language development, however, points to the conclusion that *as a rule the admissible variations of vowel tones do not exceed two bands of our vowel-tone spectrum [i.e., two adjacent sounds on the common "vowel triangle"]*.¹ And this conclusion is borne out by everyday experience.²

It is, then, really necessary for the speaker to transmit to his audience only a certain portion, the significant portion, of the sound of the words he is uttering in order that the audience shall apprehend the idea he wishes to convey to them. These sounds may vary, but only within narrow limits, from the standard expected by the audience. And moreover, the idea will be more easily grasped if the significant sounds stand out from the context, even when every sound is heard.

The whole subject of emphasis is bound up with this matter of subordination. To impress the chief idea of a speech upon the audience it must be made to stand out from the subordinate ideas. To convey the full and exact meaning of a sentence the sounds which are most important for the expression of that meaning must stand out from the auxiliary sounds. The problem is as much one of subordinating the auxiliary sounds, the words which are necessary for the grammatical construction and the coherence of the sentence but which have comparatively little significance in the progress of the thought, as of making prominent the significant sounds.

The principles which govern the selection of what is important probably form as appropriate a subject for scientific study as do the methods of showing that it is so; such guides as we yet have seem

¹ Professor Liddell's vowel-tone spectrum, *op. cit.*, p. 20, is an arrangement of the vowel sounds according to the frequencies of their characteristically reinforced partials. The resulting order, although based on a decidedly different principle, corresponds very closely to that of the vowel triangle or trapezoid of most phoneticians.

² *Op. cit.*, pp. 22-3. Examples of the variation of vowel sounds are given by Liddell: the Indiana *beryl* for usual *barrel*, and the New England *been* to rhyme with *seen* rather than *sin*.

to be scattered in various places, for the most part not associated with elocution or phonetics.¹ Again keeping in mind the natural selection found in conversation, we may say that in the practice of elocution, selection, like grouping, may best be assured by the speaker's thinking of what he is saying when he is saying it.

III

Fully as important as the proper grouping of sounds and the selection of significant sounds for the transmission of ideas by speech is the intonation or inflection. Although most phonetic transcriptions ignore this element, its importance in determining the idea content and emotional coloring as well as in showing national and dialectical characteristics is generally admitted. As Professor Fred N. Scott remarked at a recent meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English, it is the speech melody more than any other one factor which distinguishes English from American speech.² "That the melody," says Jespersen, "has the greatest significance for the full comprehension of what is said, we are made aware every hour of the day; an invective may by a change in inflection alone be turned into a caress, an assertion into a question, an expression of congratulation into biting sarcasm, etc."³ Some years ago Professor Grandgent said, "Perhaps the most striking and characteristic element of a spoken tongue—the one by which we guess the nationality of a stranger without understanding a word he says—is intonation, the varied sequence of pitch"; and later, "Intonations deserve more study. Although they form the most important element of what is called 'a good accent,' they are scarcely ever mentioned in guides to pronunciation. No matter how correct one's production of individual units, the whole thing sounds bad if the tune is wrong."⁴

Almost any work on phonetics will be found to contain a note

¹H. O. Coleman's *Intonation and Emphasis*, in *Miscellanea Phonetica* published by the International Phonetic Association in 1914, bears on this point, particularly in the discussion of the *emphasis of prominence*.

²"Improving the English of America," address at the fourteenth annual meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English, St. Louis, Mo., Nov. 28, 1924.

³Jespersen, *Elementarbuch der Phonetik*, Leipzig, 1912, p. 171.

⁴Grandgent, *Old and New*, Cambridge, Mass., 1920, papers on "Modern Language Teaching," p. 90, and on "New England Pronunciation," p. 124.

to the effect that there is a difference between singing and speaking in that the singer usually utters at least a whole syllable on one pitch and then abruptly changes to another pitch, whereas the speaker is constantly gliding rapidly up and down the scale, almost never dwelling on one pitch for an appreciable length of time; and another note explaining that there is about as much range in pitch in the speaking as in the singing voice.¹ But these observations, however much they should be borne in mind by elocutionists, do not carry us far in the study of speech melody as affecting or being affected by elocution. And most phoneticians give very little further attention to this point. Probably the chief reason why so little has been done in recording the intonations of actual speech is that there is great difficulty in determining the melody with any exactness and further difficulty in recording the melody when it has been determined.²

The investigation of melody in speech is not, however, an innovation of recent years. In 1775, Joshua Steele published *An essay towards establishing the Melody and Measure of Speech, to be expressed and perpetuated by certain Symbols*. Steele did not have the laboratory equipment of modern investigators, but he did have that which may have been of as great value, a well-trained and discriminating ear. His observations anticipated some of the very recent conclusions of phoneticians.

One of the first things we notice in the consideration of intonation is the conviction of most people that there is no melody in our own speech. As Steele said, "The extreme familiarity existing between a man and his own language makes him lose all sense of its features, of its deformities, and of its beauties."³ This is par-

¹ Ripman (Viëtor), *Elements of Phonetics*, pp. 123-5; Jones, *op. cit.*, pp. 59-60; Passy, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-9; Scripture, *op. cit.*, pp. 472, 478; Jespersen, *Lehrbuch der Phonetik*, p. 235 ff.; *et al.*

² The apparatus used by Scripture, *op. cit.*, and *Researches in Experimental Phonetics*, Washington, 1906, was very complicated and not altogether satisfactory though accurate enough to show a melody plot. The method of lifting a phonograph needle at intervals and determining the pitch by ear is, of course, much less accurate, although perhaps sufficiently so to show the general pitch pattern. As Scripture says, "The pitch of short speech sounds is hard to catch by the ear not only because each sound contains many tones that influence the total impression, but especially because the pitch is always changing."

³ Steele, *Prosodia Rationalis* (the second, emended and enlarged edition of the *Essay on the Melody and Measure of Speech*), London, 1779, p. 35. Steele suggested as proof this experiment: "Take three common men; one

ticularly true of the intonation. Everyone is familiar with the rising inflection which indicates incompleting sense and the falling inflection which indicates completed sense, but this rough and not infrequently inaccurate guide does not explain any of the subtle differences of meaning which may be given to the same set of speech sounds by only slightly varying the direction or extent of the inflection. There is intonation not merely at the ends of sentences, at places where there is definite suspension of thought, or where the most important words indicate a turn in the thought, but throughout all speech.

Consequently the very elaborate scheme to correlate the inflection with the grammatical construction of sentences made by Mandeville in the middle of the last century, although designed for use in connection with elocution, was not altogether satisfactory.¹ It was not sufficiently flexible or accurate and, being based essentially on the punctuation, did not attempt to account for such variations of inflection as may occur within similar grammatical units. Moreover, although mention was made of the effect of emotion, this system did not take into consideration the emotional context, the background of feeling which probably has fully as much influence upon the intonation as the sense or idea content. Nevertheless, Mandeville's work does indicate one kind of investigation which is needed, and many of his schemes agree with the intonation patterns obtained by recent phonetic analysis.

We are all aware that the range of inflection is ordinarily increased by excitement, particularly toward its upper limit. Thus Steele, analyzing his own practice, decided that in common discourse his "slides," or intonations, "went about a fifth above the level or key-note and a seventh below it; but if empassioned, it run

a native of Aberdeenshire, another of Tipperary, and the third of Somersetshire; and let them converse in the English language in the presence of any gentleman of the courtly tone of the metropolis; his ears will soon inform him, that every one of them talks in a tune very different from his own, and from each other; and that their difference of tone is not owing merely to loud and soft, but to a variety both of melody and of measure. . . . Every one of the four persons will perceive the other three have very distinct tones from each other, and that the tone is plainly distinguished by the alto and basso, though each in particular may fancy his own tone to be quite uniform, and in the unison with itself." (Pp. 34-5.)

¹Henry Mandeville, *The Elements of Reading and Oratory*, New York, 1845. The whole scheme is concerned with inflection; the subject of modulation is explained in chapter 3.

two whole tones higher, which made in the whole extent a compass of 13 notes, or octave and sixth."¹

The next step in analysis which must naturally follow is much more complex. We are confronted by the question: What is the significance of any particular inflection of a given pattern and extent? Or by what pattern do we express a certain kind of idea or emotion? Steele's essay did not include any attempt to determine the relation of the "slides" which he found in all speech to the meaning, for he felt "that the marks of quantity, pausing, and emphasis alone were so sufficient that a native needed scarce any further help to read with surprising correctness of expression; though I must acknowledge the meaning of a sentence may often be entirely altered, by changing the accent from acute to grave, or vice versa."² This reservation seems to have more weight than the preceding statement; that Steele considered intonation very important is apparent from his use of the word melody in the subtitle of his book. The general plan of Mandeville's work again indicates the kind of investigation necessary for the study of the meaning of inflection.

Recently several phoneticians have attempted to study intonation more carefully. From experiments with phonograph records, Scripture has reached certain conclusions which are not only interesting in themselves, but which also very clearly indicate a large field for research.

The fundamental form for the American sentence is the convex melody, beginning low, rising steadily to a maximum, and then steadily falling. This form is varied for purposes of expression. For example, an interrogative sentence requiring the answer "yes" or "no" does not fall at the end, but rises higher than at the middle. Other interrogative sentences keep the convex form, unless there is some special change to produce expression. Exclamatory sentences retain in general the convex form. Religious speech is characterized by comparative evenness of melody, by small convexity, and by general low pitch. In conversation, characteristic variations are introduced to express irritation, sarcasm, solemnity, etc.³

Of course, it is the nature of these "special changes" and "characteristic variations" which it is very important for elocution to discover.

Commenting on a melody plot of the opening words of Depew's "Speech on Forefathers' Day," Scripture says:

¹ Steele, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

² *Ibid.*, p. 30.

³ Scripture, *Researches in Experimental Phonetics*, pp. 69-70.

Confining ourselves on the present occasion to the general features of the melody, we note that in the first phrase the melody rises somewhat suddenly at the start according to the typical convex form for the American sentence. Instead, however, of completing the convexity it rises suddenly at the end. The average tone is rather low. This form of melody gives a special emotional character to the phrase, for which no appropriate terms exist. . . . We can define the expressive character of the melody here only by saying that it is the one appropriate for a solemn statement in an oration. The evenness of the melody gives it solemnity, the steady rise through the phrase gives it pomposity, the sudden rise at the end makes it somewhat brusque and challenging. As only a few researches on speech melody have been made, little can be said concerning the change in emotional effect which such a phrase would undergo with changes in the melody. We know, however, that if the even melody had not the sudden rise and had fallen at the end, the phrase would have had a religious intonation. If the evenness had been replaced by fluctuations, the melody would have lost its solemnity, even if it had retained the other characteristic of solemnity, namely, the general low pitch. . . . The last two phrases are in contrast to the first four. The evenness is replaced by great flexibility, the rise at the end is replaced by an exaggerated fall. The entire effect of such a melody is distinctly humorous—an effect that is increased by the very low tones employed, especially at the end. . . . Here the effect is that of a staid humor of a mild degree. Both these phrases might have been spoken with rising closure without destroying the general tenor of the impression, but the humorous turn and the contrast would have been lacking. Throughout the record the melody is one that is appropriate to ceremonial oration with a constant humorous twist to it.¹

This is something of a guidepost, pointing the direction towards a goal though by no means marking the end of the journey. Most of the statements are a bit too general and vague to have definitive value, but they do suggest possibilities.

Another noteworthy study of intonation has been made by Harold E. Palmer. One of the most noticeable characteristics of Palmer's work which is disadvantageous for Americans, is that he is writing of English intonation, and, as has been suggested, it is in the melody that we find the most marked difference between English and American speech. The whole scheme is designed for the use of foreign students of English, though the author says the book should be of equal, or even greater, service to teachers of spoken English—perhaps for elocution. There is no explanation of the method of research, but, assuming the observation of phenomena to be scientifically satisfactory, the "synoptic summary of the

¹ Scripture, *Researches in Experimental Phonetics*, pp. 70-2.

semantic functions of the tone-groups"¹ is very illuminating. In this summary we find, and elsewhere there are illustrations and explanations, thirty-one kinds of statements, questions, commands, etc., classified in eight subdivisions and these in turn arranged under four chief varieties of tone-groups. The melody patterns are, however, only very general approximations, perhaps as definite as may be possible. There seems to be much that is vague in the classification; for example, "Special Questions" appears in six subdivisions, the only difference between two of these being, "when repeated" and "echoed." Certain emotions are taken into consideration, but very few.

As to the sequences of these tone-groups, Palmer says:

In the present state of our knowledge (or rather ignorance) concerning the functions of tonetic phenomena, we can do little but collect typical examples of the various sorts of sequences, endeavour to specify their more obvious semantic functions and trust that these collections will serve as a starting point for further research. . . . The association of tone-groups in sequences has certainly a great bearing on problems of semantic expression; we unconsciously observe these unwritten laws of English intonation, and in so doing ensure the right connection or balance between the different parts of the sentence.²

For elocution it may be suggested that we need some conscious knowledge of the way in which we "unconsciously observe these unwritten laws of English intonation."

Daniel Jones, who uses a curved line, as does Scripture, to represent intonation—seemingly a more satisfactory method than Palmer's dots—repeats in his later work the statement already made in his *Pronunciation of English*, that "intonation is most important for indicating shades of meaning." His emphasis on this aspect of phonetics is apparent in the increased amount of space accorded it in the *Outline of English Phonetics*, thirty-four pages in place of five.³ The seven rules of 1914 have been expanded to ten rules with numerous exceptions. These rules are based upon the usage of the

¹ Palmer, *English Intonation with Systematic Exercises*, Cambridge, 1922, p. 86.

² *Ibid.*, p. 87.

³ Jones, *op. cit.*, pp. 59-64; *An Outline of English Phonetics*, New York, 1922, pp. 135-68. To be sure the latter work is larger than the other, but the increase in the proportion of the chapter on intonation to the rest of the book is significant. Jones's *Intonation Curves*, Leipzig, 1909, provides examples, without rules or other comment.

South of England and consequently, like Palmer's, are not of much use to Americans. The great amount of illustrative material, particularly that showing how different meanings can be attached to the same phrases by different intonations, is very valuable for the study of English speech. A similar study of American speech is needed.

A much more detailed discussion of one of the aspects of intonation is that by H. O. Coleman. He is in accord with other writers in saying: "One reason for indicating relative pitch in preference to absolute pitch is that the effect of any given intonation will be found to depend on its internal relationships. The size of the intervals and their position in the musical scale may often vary according to external circumstances, such as states of mind or nerves . . . without altering the meaning of the words."¹ This statement applies, of course, only to the meaning of the words, not to the emotional context. So Coleman distinguishes between an "emphasis of prominence," such as attaches to "the last word that one would sacrifice to save a halfpenny on a telegram," and an emphasis of "intensity," which is "that manner of utterance which imparts an added degree of intensity to some part of the idea represented by a word."²

As to the first, Coleman states that, "prominence is invariably accompanied by a sudden turn (rise or fall) in the intonation. . . . It is this intonation turn that gives the prominence, while the stress merely serves to mark where the turn begins. The emphasized syllable may begin lower or higher than the preceding one, but there must occur, either during this syllable, or from it to the next, a sudden fall or a sudden rise."³ As to the second, "For intensification a distinctive intonation is probably never absent. . . . Intonation cannot, however, be regarded as the *essential* of intensifying expression. There enter into it a number of other factors—special stress, extra slowness, extra quickness, length of word . . . pauses. . . ."⁴ And as a general statement on the former practice, "The generally accepted view (which regards the choice of rising or falling intonation as having some bearing on the distinction be-

¹ Coleman, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 8-11.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

tween question and statement), must be considerably modified—perhaps entirely rejected . . . in fact the choice is governed by rules of emphasis possessing a much more general application.”¹

The contributions of Klinghardt to the study of English intonations offer us even more definite suggestions.² His treatment of word-groups, already mentioned, as being determined by the sense and manifested by the intonation, seems to be more reasonable than any of the other theories, if not conclusive. But Klinghardt is chiefly concerned with the correlation of inflection and meaning. In the introduction to the *Übungen* he says:

We have two ways of speaking: the strictly logical, which is used for simple communication with others and is addressed to their understanding; and the sentimental or emotional, which expresses the feeling of the speaker and is intended to influence the feelings of the one addressed. Aids for the former are: the force of the voice, *stress*, and rising and falling inflections, *intonation*. . . . Aids for the latter are, in connection with those cited for the logical: on the one hand peculiarity or coloring, such as occasional extraordinary stress, and also extraordinarily high pitch for whole groups; on the other hand the tempo of the speech.³

Having suggested the significance of intonation for both the logical and the emotional aspects of speaking, he discusses both at great length and with many illustrations. Inasmuch as Klinghardt discusses the intonations of various kinds of expressions rather than the meanings of various kinds of intonations, he has no such schematic chart as Palmer. But the treatment seems more satisfactory, although, like Palmer, he uses a method of indicating the melody by dots, and, like Palmer and Jones, he is concerned with English melody, which is not at all American. Klinghardt's explanation of logical intonation patterns is not merely practical for pedagogical purposes, but contains suggestions for a scientific method.

None of these investigators of intonation has taken into account the special problems of elocution, so that their findings are only indirectly valuable. Observation and recording of the intonation of extemporaneous speaking, and of any public speaking at the time of delivery, are obviously most difficult. It is only at the time of actual delivery on a real occasion and with a real audience that the characteristics of intonation which are of particular significance to

¹ Coleman, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

² Klinghardt und Klemm, *op. cit.*, and Klinghardt, *op. cit.*

³ Klinghardt und Klemm, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

elocution can be observed. The nearest approach, not very near, seems to have been made by Scripture in his analysis of the record of Depew's speech. The effect of occasion and audience upon the speaker as manifested by his intonation is a field of research which the phoneticians have not preëmpted and one in which all investigation must be more significant for elocution than for phonetics in general.

Of the points upon which I have been able briefly to touch as being contacts of the special studies of phonetics and elocution, the matter of grouping the sounds according to the sense content of the words seems to be pretty well agreed upon by phoneticians, though there may still be some dispute as to how this is accomplished, and though one may say with Jespersen and Klinghardt that investigation of word-groups has scarcely begun. The matter of gradation is settled as a phonetic question, but there is still much to be done with the analogous problem of determining just how much of the flow of sound and in particular cases just what portion must be perceived by the auditor in order that he may reconstruct in his own mind the idea that was in the mind of the speaker. The third problem, that of intonation or melody, is probably of greater significance than either of the others and as yet has scarcely been touched. In all cases the special applications to elocution have yet to be investigated.

There are many other problems that fall within the field where the specialist in phonetics and the specialist in elocution work together, notably perhaps the significance of loudness and stress and the rate of speaking, particularly variations in rate. It is remarkable that Joshua Steele seems to have contributed as much toward the solution of these problems as anyone in the century and a half since his time.

STUTTERING

SMILEY BLANTON

IT was while working with Professor James Albert Winans at Cornell University that I first undertook investigations of the causes and treatment of stuttering. Both as head of the Department of Public Speaking, and personally, Professor Winans encouraged and helped me in my study of stuttering and of other speech difficulties. This work was begun in 1907. At that time the general opinion among physicians in the country was that stuttering was caused by some weakness of the tongue or some abnormality of the nervous system.

I soon became convinced that stuttering was caused primarily by psychological factors; and subsequent studies by myself and others have strengthened this theory. Stuttering is now regarded by the medical profession as a neuropsychiatric problem, to be treated primarily by psychotherapeutic means.

For a long time past, the prevailing treatment of stuttering was by phonetic exercises and vocal drill. Stutterers were given such exercises as "Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers," and other tongue-twisters. The stutterer was considered more or less fair game. Neglected by the medical profession, he turned to the quack stuttering school whose alluring advertisements in the magazines urged the stutterer to come with the hope of being permanently cured.

Stuttering, under which term we include stammering, may be defined from a descriptive standpoint as a break in the rhythm of speech due to a blocking or inhibiting of the coördinating nerve impulses resulting in an incoördination and tension. Stuttering is a symptom just as fever is a symptom and must not be considered as a disease in itself. The cause of stuttering must be sought through a study of the emotional life, conscious and subconscious.

To treat the symptom successfully the various causes back of the symptom must be understood.

Stuttering is common enough to constitute a very serious problem. A personal survey of six thousand school children of Madison, Wisconsin, revealed that eight out of one thousand stuttered. Dr. Wallin found, in a survey of the school children of St. Louis, that seven out of one thousand stuttered. Surveys generally, in this country and abroad, show that about nine children out of every thousand stutter.

Not infrequently we hear it claimed that children who stutter will overcome the defect in time. In order to determine the number of boys and girls who reach the age of eighteen and still stutter, a personal survey was made of fourteen hundred members of the freshman class at the University of Wisconsin. It was found that one per cent of the students had a marked stutter and one per cent had a mild stutter. It will be seen from these figures that stuttering cannot be left to time for remedy. Even though the defect itself disappears in some cases, the cause may remain—an undue sensitiveness, a feeling of inferiority which interferes with the development and progress of the individual.

There is apparently very little relationship between the severity of the symptoms and the severity of the emotional difficulty which gives rise to them. Many people have a very slight stutter, so slight that it is not easily noticed, but they feel severely handicapped; as one boy expressed it, he never knew when he was going to have trouble with a word, and, even though he stuttered very rarely, meeting people and adjusting himself to groups was a terrible strain.

The distribution of stuttering between boys and girls is very disproportionate. There is from four to six times as much stuttering among boys as among girls. Just why, is not known. When a girl does stutter, however, it is just as difficult to overcome the defect as it is in the case of a boy.

We do not find any explanation of the cause of stuttering through the examination of the bodily organs. Of course, such conditions as malnutrition, diseased tonsils, carious teeth, and nasal obstructions, may cause an increase in the natural irritability of the nervous system, but these conditions are not the cause of stuttering. Moreover, stuttering is not inherited. A sensitive nervous system may

be inherited, it is true, and on the basis of it stuttering is likely to develop unless there is proper discipline and training.

Speech is one of the chief ways by which we adjust ourselves to the group. Stuttering is caused by fear, partly conscious and partly subconscious, of meeting the group. The child fears to meet the group, but he also has a desire to do so. He would like to flee from the situation altogether, but also he would like, if possible, to meet the situation. These tendencies to flee from and to meet the situation come into conflict and there is a compromise in which there is neither good speech nor absence of speech, but broken, inhibited, stuttering speech.

A search into the emotional life of stuttering children always reveals some of these emotional attitudes and conflicts—timidity, strong feeling of inferiority, overdependence on the parents, and a feeling of general inadequacy. In some cases we notice a marked rigidity towards life, an unwillingness to change food and sleep habits; or an oversuggestibility, a chronic fear of meeting certain groups of people or situations, a marked sensitiveness.

Some have claimed that these emotional conditions are the result of stuttering and have nothing to do with its cause. A study of the personality of stutterers, however, shows that their emotional attitudes are primary and are the cause of the speech defect. Stuttering may accentuate the emotional condition, but it does not cause it.

The essential characteristic of the temperament of the stuttering child is a marked sensitiveness to social situations. This sensitiveness is really a great virtue if properly trained and controlled. In my own experience with stutterers I have come to feel that they have the most pleasing and delightful personalities of any group with which I have come in contact. Their quick responses to social situations, their marked sensitiveness, and their keenness of perception of social relationships give them an insight and develop a type of personality that is pleasing and appealing. Stuttering should not be thought of as something that is wholly bad. It should be thought of more as a danger signal which indicates that the child requires very careful training in order that he may properly utilize a sensitive, overreacting nervous system.

A study of the temperaments of two hundred unselected stuttering children revealed the following facts: fourteen per cent seemed

to have normal temperaments; forty-eight per cent had marked feelings of inferiority; fourteen per cent overcompensated for this inferiority by being bumptious and forward; fifteen per cent showed marked swings of mood beyond the average—happy and excitable one day, moody and depressed the next; and nine per cent were overexcitable and overactive.

A psychological study of stutterers enables us to divide them into several clearly marked groups:

1. The Hysterical Type
 - a. Conversion hysteria
 - b. Fixation hysteria
2. The Anxiety Type
3. The Hypomanic Type
4. The Organic or Motor Type

Case 1. Illustrating conversion hysteria. Mary, age eleven, was born on a farm. She was in good physical condition, with good intelligence, and no abnormalities of the articulatory organs. She walked about four or five months later than the average child; she did not begin to talk until about the age of twenty-two to twenty-four months, which is almost a year late. This slowness in walking and talking probably indicated an innate inability to coördinate the muscles easily. (A predisposition to speech disorders seems to run in the family: an uncle and an aunt, whom the child never saw, stuttered.) Under emotional strain we should expect this child to show some speech symptom.

When the girl started to school she began to stutter. Speech is an adaptive mechanism and very often children are unable to make the adaptations required at school. After about a year the stuttering tended to disappear, so that it was scarcely noticeable except at times of stress. Her mother died when the child was five years old. After that time, her two aunts and three grown brothers looked after her. She was very happy on the farm, and her speech defect seemed to be entirely eliminated. Then the father, who had been living in town, married again, and brought the little daughter in to live at his new home. The child heartily disliked this change, although her stepmother made a good mother. Mary yearned to be back on the farm where she was petted by her brothers and humored by her aunts.

When she started to school in town it was found that she could not talk. For several weeks she was mute. Later, she began to talk in a whisper. She was given training and after some weeks was able to speak in a tone loud enough to be heard. This mutism was of an hysterical nature.

She reëntered school in the autumn and was able to talk very well. She had practically no speech difficulty until the spring, when the desire to go on the farm probably grew more intense; and the emotional struggle gave rise to severe symptoms of stuttering.

The treatment consisted primarily in training the child to meet the situations of life adequately, in training her to understand that the attempt to gain her ends by hysteria was not wise. The speech training consisted of a few simple exercises in tone production, without mention of breathing.

Often the symptom of stuttering is an hysterical mechanism. The physical symptom is caused by a mental conflict. In one form there is direct conversion of a mental conflict into a physical symptom. It was so in the case of this girl. There was a conflict in her mind between her desire to stay in town with her father, and the desire to go back to the farm with her brothers and her aunts. This conflict was carried over into a physical symptom which attacked the speech mechanism because there was some inherent disability there. It should be noted that when this girl was allowed to go back to the farm she had no trouble whatsoever with her speech.

Case 2. Illustrating fixation hysteria. Ella, age eleven, was asked to recite a poem at the Commencement exercises in her school. She was expected to have a flower in her hand to illustrate one of the passages of the poem. Her mother, however, was too poor to buy her the flower. The little girl, not realizing her mother's poverty, felt very much aggrieved; an emotional conflict was set up. She felt that she was neglected, that no one loved her. The day came when she was to recite, and she forgot her piece and stuttered. This stuttering was a transitory symptom of the disturbance caused by the forgetting. Curiously enough, however, the stuttering continued; the next day the child was unable to recite in class without stuttering, and she began to stutter at home.

This was a case of fixation hysteria. The symptom was fixed

and carried on by the mental conflict, resulting from the feeling that she was not loved, that no one cared for her, and that her mother was not giving her a "square deal." The stuttering continued until the child was fully grown. Through an analysis of her emotional life the patient was shown the cause of her speech defect—and the speech defect disappeared. No speech training whatsoever was given in this case. There was, presumably, no organic inferiority of the speech mechanism.

There are some workers in the field of speech correction who say that the breathing mechanism is at fault in stuttering and that the cure for it is to train the breathing. Breathing is, of course, interfered with in all cases of stuttering. Every emotional disturbance breaks up the rhythm of breathing. Training the breathing then is dealing with an effect and not a cause. In many of these hysterical cases training the breathing calls the attention to this function of speech of which the patient was not conscious and "sets" the symptom. That is, the patient says, "Oh, yes, I know what's wrong; my breathing is all wrong. Professor So-and-So said so." It is often found that the difficulty increases and that the speech is made worse by calling the patient's attention to his faulty breathing and by giving him exercises intended to correct it.

Case 3. Illustrating the anxiety type. Jane, age eight, physically well developed, with no malnutrition; nervous, high-strung; articulatory organs negative. Her mother was a high-strung, nervous woman who worried most of the time. There was a history of speech defects in the family. Jane walked and talked at the usual time. When she entered school she began to stutter; she was timid and fearful; she worried constantly and was very anxious. She worried if she missed a point in recitation; she worried if her grades were not always excellent; she worried because she was late for school. In fact, the nervousness and anxiety of the mother had been exactly imitated by the child. There was a constant emotional disturbance in her mind, so great that it amounted to an anxiety-neurosis. This anxiety-neurosis affected the speech mechanism and the girl became a chronic stutterer. No poor speech was noticed in this case; she talked smoothly and clearly when she was not under emotional strain.

The training consisted entirely in emotional reëducation. Neither breathing exercises nor training of the articulatory organs were given. This girl's speech defect was arrested entirely after one semester's training by the teacher of speech correction.

Case 4. Illustrating the hypomaniac type. John, age five, well developed, well nourished, in splendid physical shape. Both parents were very nervous and high-strung. The child was overactive, never quiet; his attention flighty, and his general control poor. There is a type of nervous breakdown characterized by such overactivity of mind and body. There are persons, however, who have this same overactivity but in a much milder form; they are called hypomanics. When this condition is found in children there is overexcitability and extreme emotional pitch, so that when the child tries to talk he blocks and is unable to proceed.

The training for this boy consisted of emotional reëducation. He was taught to relax, to adjust slowly and easily. Above all, the mother and father were instructed to modify their own behavior so that they would not, in turn, excite the child.

The organic or motor type. The motor type is best seen in cases of children who have had encephalitis. We have noted at least two cases of children who, after this brain disease, have shown a marked stutter. In these cases there is a definite organic factor.

A THEORY OF STUTTERING

The physical characteristics of stuttering have been accounted for in many ways: they have been attributed to organic injuries of the brain, injuries and defects of the nerves running from the brain to the speech organs, pressure by enlarged glands on the nerve supplying the diaphragm, muscular defects of the tongue, defective auditory or visual imagery, congestion of the brain, and a reduction of the alkali content of the blood. These are but a few of the numerous conditions that have been pointed to as explaining the baffling and curious blockings and incoördinations that characterize stuttering.

A consideration of the function and development of the nervous system will throw much light upon the physical symptoms of stuttering, and, we believe, will adequately explain those symptoms.

In the earlier stages of the development of the nervous system, it was segmental in formation. In these stages each segment was practically independent of the other segments, and only a very simple type of behavior was possible. The sensory stimuli were transmitted into motor impulses without delay. The resultant type of behavior from such a nervous system therefore was quite fixed and limited. Under the segmental type of nervous system the sensory impulses from the nose, from the eye, and from the ear, discharged immediately into the motor cells, and action occurred without delay.

A more flexible type of behavior was possible only when certain nerve cells were developed whose function it was to coördinate all of the segments of the nervous system into one whole. The immediate type of response which had formerly been present was inhibited by these newly formed cells. Certain of the crude and the primitive actions hitherto carried on by the lower segmental nerve cells were entirely inhibited and the whole was fused together, resulting in a more complicated type of motor response.

It is quite clear that with the segmental type there was a conflict between the various sensory impulses, so that a series of suprasegmental nerve cells called the thalamus was developed, whose chief function it was to receive the sensory impulses from different parts of the body and to modify and to analyze these crude, conflicting sensory impulses before they reached the motor nerve centers.

There was also developed a series of suprasegmental motor nerve centers whose chief function it was to coördinate the motor impulses set up by the sensory stimuli from the thalamus, so that only one motor impulse would reach the lower segmental nerve centers. While most of the thalamus represents the suprasegmental nerve center on the sensory side, a part of these nerve cells are also motor. In addition, there are other suprasegmental motor centers such as the caudate and lenticular nuclei.

Later on in the development of the animal, there developed a series of nerve cells whose chief function it was to coördinate and control these suprasegmental cells. These nerve cells are in the covering of the great brain itself, called the cortex.

All sensory impulses, with the exception of those of the nose, pass through the thalamus before they reach the cortex. Before

the cortex was developed there was a very simple type of activity much more violent and much more immediate than that which occurs after the development of the cortex. One of the chief functions of the cortex of the brain is the inhibition of the overactivity of these lower nerve centers. As Head and Holmes point out, "The chief aim of human evolution is the domination of feeling and instinct by discriminative mental capacities. This struggle on the highest plane of mental life is begun at the lowest sensory level and the issue becomes more clearly defined the nearer the sensory impulses approach the field of consciousness."

Speech uses only muscle groups whose primary function is other than that of speech. These muscle groups, whose function it is to perform very definite acts such as chewing, or sucking, or the tongue movements in mastication, or coughing, or breathing, are called integrative synergic units. These integrative units are made up of simple synergic units. All of these muscle groups are controlled by nerve cells in the lower part of the brain or spinal cord. These various muscle groups and their controlling nerve centers are coordinated by the nerve cells in the cortex into complicated movements which cause speech. This is made possible only through the inhibition of certain tendencies of the lower nerve cells to act independently of each other as they did in the early segmental stage. This is prevented through the inhibitory and discriminative function of the cortex of the brain.

Under the influence of the mild state of fear that we know as embarrassment or anxiety, this inhibitory and discriminative function of the cortex is partially or wholly blocked. It is probable that under the influence of embarrassment or fear there is a diffusion of blood throughout the lower nerve cells because of the contraction of the blood vessels in the body, and this accentuates the affective tone of the thalamus which is the center for our crude emotions.

As a result of this increase of affective tone in the thalamus and the resulting loss of discriminative and inhibitory function of the cortex, various muscle groups involved in speaking lose their coordinated relationships and each group acts under the influence of its own lower nerve centers. In stuttering there are such crude, primitive, and fundamental movements as sucking, chewing, masticating, coughing, and vomitive sounds. Sometimes these movements are almost complete in their primitive forms. At other times

they are only partially complete. There is not a complete suckling movement but a suggestion of a suckling movement. It may be asked why the stutterer does not go completely back to the primitive suckling form. The use of the suckling movement has been inhibited by social training, and the association centers detect this effort on the part of the individual to return to an infantile type of behavior.

The stutterer's choice of a particular type of primitive movement to return to might be determined by one of a number of different things. He might have experienced a fear while he was using some particular speech movement, so that the total primitive movement came out under stress and there developed a conditioned response. Or it might be that some synergic unit was so satisfactory in infancy that the individual with a psychoneurotic tendency is unable to forego it as the majority do, and returns to this primitive movement under emotional conflict.

When we analyze the various physical symptoms found in stuttering we find just these movements: the suckling movements, chewing movements, masticating movements, vomiting movements, and spasmodic movements of the diaphragm.

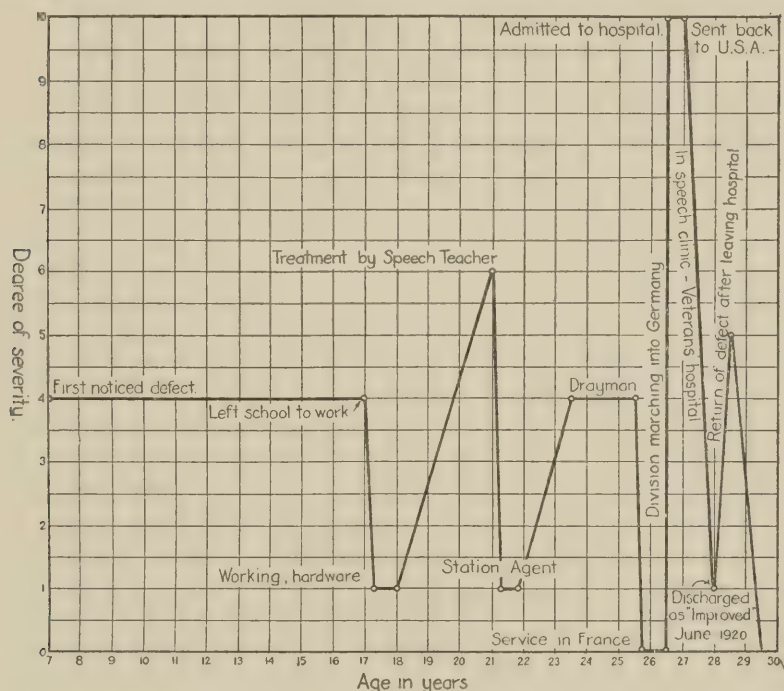
In brief then, it may be said that the physical symptoms of stuttering are due to the blocking of the inhibitory and discriminative control of the cortex over the lower nerve cells, caused by emotions of embarrassment and fear, conscious and unconscious, allowing the primitive muscle groups each to tend to return to its own primitive function.

THE USE OF GRAPHS IN THE STUDY OF STUTTERING

It has been the custom in our clinic to chart every speech case so that we have a graphic representation of its variations. Vertically, the chart is divided into ten equal portions. The patient is requested to consider *ten* as indicating the maximum severity of his stuttering. At *zero* the speech is normal. The horizontal line of the chart represents the age of the patient. The chart on the opposite page shows the facts obtained by one such graphic representation.

This patient was twenty-eight years of age. In 1920, he was in a hospital for psychoneurotic war veterans. His speech defect ap-

peared at the age of seven. At that time his stuttering was *four*. It did not vary until he graduated from high school at the age of seventeen. At this time he showed marked improvement and his stuttering was only *one*. For a year, while he was working in a hardware store as a clerk, his speech continued unchanged. Then the work grew irksome and the speech defect began to get worse, going from *one* to *six*. He received treatment for his speech at this



time from a careful and sympathetic teacher, and the defect went down to *one*. He became a station agent and as this work caused a great deal of strain his speech defect went up to *four*.

For two years while he worked as a drayman his stuttering remained the same. When the war came he was denied enlistment because of his speech defect; but in three months his speech became entirely normal. He joined the army at the age of twenty-five, and was sent to France where he was a runner carrying messages from one company to another. For six months he served much of the time under fire without any speech trouble at all. Then his divi-

sion moved into Germany and the patient's speech defect began to get worse. He was bored and homesick. His speech defect got so bad that he could not carry on his army duties and it reached its maximum amount of continuousness at *ten*.

The patient was admitted to the hospital, sent back to the United States, and placed in a veterans' hospital. He was treated for a year by psychotherapy and his speech defect dropped back to *one*. He was discharged as very much improved. Six months after leaving the hospital his speech defect had gone up again to *five*, but at the end of a year he wrote and said that his speech was perfectly normal. He is now successfully employed.

TREATMENT OF STUTTERING

In general, the treatment of stuttering may be divided into the following heads: (1) physical hygiene; (2) mental hygiene; and (3) speech training.

To begin with the third of these, it may be said that the work in speech training is quite simple. Articulatory exercises should never be used, as they are not only useless but also harmful. Some teachers find vocal and breathing exercises helpful, but we have stopped using them altogether. Exercises for relaxation are given whereby the control of the cortex of the brain is established over the lower nerve centers. While the individual is in this relaxed state he is asked to talk naturally; and through physiological training and through suggestion is built up a new set of speech habits and a new attitude of confidence toward his speech. Later on, as the individual improves he is placed in classes where the members talk informally, carry on discussions, and act in plays. Drawing, queer tones, waving the hands, and such devices are never used.

As to physical hygiene, the child's sleeping conditions are so arranged that he sleeps alone, that he gets fresh air, and that he gets sufficient hours of sleep. In the case of the nervous child we also have him relax after luncheon and after dinner. In very nervous cases we have other periods of the day set aside for rest and relaxation. The diet of the child is important. The majority of children who stutter require special attention as to their food. Out of three hundred cases of stuttering one hundred and ninety-three

were found to be finicky about their food, and two cases were neurotic vomiters. Finickiness about food in most cases means finickiness about other things. Moreover, a child who is finicky about his food is likely to be poorly nourished. Children who do not eat enough green vegetables may have a vitamine deficiency, which may make for irritability of the nervous system. For these reasons, then, great stress is laid on developing normal appetites in these children. Care is taken to see that they get the proper amount and kind of exercise. If there are any physical conditions which make for irritation, such as diseased tonsils or infected sinuses, they are corrected. Tonsils should not be removed unless they are diseased. Sometimes operations are performed only because the physician believes that removal of the tonsils will cure stuttering.

The work in mental hygiene falls under two heads: (1) re-education of the individual's emotional life, and (2) reorganization of the individual's home and school life.

In the case of the stutterer we find feelings of timidity, fear, anxiety, and sometimes specific mental conflicts that give rise to the hysterical type of stuttering. These difficulties are discussed with the child in such a way that he can understand them; and ways are pointed out to him whereby he can win success and find a healthy outlet for his normal desire to make friends. We especially try to see that the child gains some success at home, in the school, and on the playground.

The home life is studied to see if the parents treat the child with too much tenderness or too much harshness. The parents are urged to maintain consistent discipline, to teach obedience, but to avoid unnecessarily suppressing the child's natural instinctive urges. The child must be taught to play; to get along with other boys and girls. He must be allowed to rough it and must not be "babied" too much. In the school, the teacher should be asked to stimulate, and to praise the child when he deserves it, but not to permit him to get out of things because of his stuttering.

The problem of stuttering can best be met in public schools by properly trained teachers of speech correction. These teachers should be social workers with training in psychiatry, and having a special knowledge of the mechanism of speech and the ability to reëducate children with emotional difficulties. The teachers should be supervised by a psychiatrist.

The best type of organization maintains a child guidance clinic in the school system, from which the work of the teachers of speech may be coördinated. The children who stutter should be taken in small groups and given treatment daily. Part of the time each day should be devoted to individual work and part to group work. In the group work the children should be asked to tell stories, and to have games requiring speech, such as playing store and selling tickets. The object of this work is not to train in public speaking nor in speech, but is to teach the children to adjust themselves to the group. The teachers of speech should not confine their work to the schools, but should visit the homes and arrange the child's life in such a way that he will develop the emotional poise and confidence necessary for correct, smooth speech.

A great deal of the efficiency in the speech training depends upon the personality of the worker. Sometimes people with good personalities cure stutterers of their symptoms solely through the suggestible influence of their personalities. This explains why people with such various methods or no methods at all get results in certain cases. The results in such cases are always unsatisfactory, because the emotional attitudes are likely to remain, and under strain the symptoms of stuttering return.

Sure results can be obtained only through complete reëducation of the stutterer's emotional life so that he understands himself and is able to meet life without fear and without anxiety. When this emotional reëducation has been accomplished, the speech defect will take care of itself.

SPEECH DEFECTS OTHER THAN STUTTERING

MARGARET GRAY BLANTON ¹

THE speech surveys of a number of years ago not only contained a large number of names for the various disorders of speech, names which seemed to be overlapping, but these names were so lacking in descriptive quality that it was impossible to tell from the terms used what defects of speech were meant. "Poor speech," for instance, might mean any defect, including dialectal speech, or bad grammar. In connection with our own survey, therefore, we undertook to formulate a descriptive terminology, stating that our proposed terminology was tentative and on trial. We have, in fact, found it very serviceable, with the exception of the term "letter substitution" which has been changed to "letter-sound substitution."²

This classification is: (1) *delayed speech*; (2) *stuttering*, which includes *stammering*; (3) *letter-sound substitution*; (4) *oral inactivities*; and (5) *vocal difficulties*.

For the purpose of classification, it is necessary to divide the disorders into clear-cut and distinct groups, though a speech defect in which some other speech defect does not play at least a secondary part is very uncommon. Oral inactivity often accompanies stuttering, and letter-sound substitution often accompanies oral inactivity. But, for purposes of study and with this reservation, the defects may well be classified as above.

As Dr. Blanton's article is a study of stuttering, I will not discuss that disorder except in so far as it is sometimes a complication of the other disorders. Nor will this article attempt to deal with the speech disorders resulting from paralysis and aphasia.

¹ This work was done in collaboration with Dr. Smiley Blanton at the Speech Clinic of the University of Wisconsin.

² For this modification we are indebted to Miss Sophie A. Pray of New York City.

DELAYED SPEECH

The development of speech begins with the specializing of the earliest infant cries. At first the cries of the child are all very much alike with the exceptions of the cry due to colic and the cry of so-called anger, stimulated by pressure or scrubbing or rough handling of any sort. Even this cry of anger is not easily distinguished from the cries of extreme hunger or pain. At about eight months, the normal child has achieved not only a certain specialization of the cries, but also certain definite specialization of the babbling sounds. "Ma-ma" begins to be associated with the mother, and "pa-pa" with the father. This change is, of course, the result of training. In the study of the development both of speech and of its abnormalities, it must always be remembered that there is no demonstrable speech center at birth. We cannot postulate the inheritance of speech itself, but only of the capacity for speech. If speech were inherited, the totally deaf would talk without training, and an English child taken into a French family would speak English and not French. In other words, the capacity for speech is present, but not the speech form. The entire process of developing speech is, then, a phase of the definite learning processes, and must, of course, be treated as associative rather than as deliberate and analytical.

At the age of two, the child should be able to communicate his comparatively simple needs and wishes. He should be using a certain amount of organized language, that is, words in simple sentence formation, and he should understand a very considerable amount of complex and highly organized speech. Speech develops somewhat earlier in girls than in boys—a fact which has stimulated much facetiousness and pseudophilosophy. Actually the acquiring of all the small muscular movements seems somewhat easier for girls than for boys. But the date of attaining clear-cut, full speech is usually very difficult to determine. It may be safely stated, however, that a child should be able to communicate at two years, and that at four years the speech should be clear and phonetically correct.

For many reasons speech is not always acquired in a regular and normal way. Some of the causes of delay may be briefly stated.

The first cause is poor intelligence. The low-grade idiot is

often defined as a person who cannot acquire speech. Here the fundamental defect may be an undeveloped brain. In the higher grades of intelligence, the speech is correspondingly better developed, and is quite fully developed in the moron, though the superior intelligence will show a higher grade of speech, with a larger vocabulary and more involved and complex language forms.

A second cause for the delay in the development of speech is injury to the brain, due to hemorrhage in the brain at birth, or to mechanical injuries of one sort or another, or to diseases such as encephalitis. These cases of delayed speech frequently present a very puzzling picture, sometimes having the appearance of the extremely low-grade intelligence. They often prove very responsive to systematic training both in speech and in general behavior. Many other kinds of injury to the brain in infancy may delay the acquisition of speech, paralysis, in its various forms, being one of these.

A third cause of delayed speech may be roughly described as "glandular anomalies." In these cases the glands of internal secretion seem to be undeveloped or to lack the activity necessary for the rounded development of the child. Such children often present the appearance and symptoms of dwarfism, with all the peculiar tendencies and gestures associated in our minds with the jester and the court fool. They are by no means to be classed as untrainable, although very often the inculcation of any habit in them is a difficult and slow process, due to the fact that their lives have been more or less self-directed and their definite organized training has not been undertaken from their birth. Very often the giving of the simplest speech to these children is the means of "unlocking" their intelligence, and making possible those contacts which lead to a general development.

A fourth cause of delayed speech is bad training. This is the most common and most confusing cause. The majority of persons assume that speech is an inherited process, and so make no effort to train the child. Even the intelligent and the well-informed often remark of a child of two, or even of three, who has very little speech, perhaps none, that its state is not at all abnormal and will be outgrown.

In the majority of cases where the child is intelligent and comes into contact with children and adults outside of the family, it learns that speech is a necessity; but such children have learned an expen-

sive lesson, as their speech often develops unnaturally and the emotional overload under which they learn leads to a rather faulty speech. It is also true that the home conditions which delay the ordinary child's acquisition of speech are the conditions most likely to cause stuttering and oral inactivities.

For example, a child of six was brought to us with no speech. (This is not literally true as the child did have one word, which was "no." We have seen a large number of children who have developed speech late, but we have yet to see an intelligent child of two who does not have some way of indicating the negative wish.) This particular child was escorted by his mother and father, his grandmother and grandfather on the mother's side, and his grandmother and grandfather on the father's side, and he himself was riding in a go-cart pushed by a negro "mammy." The second nurse had remained at home. This meant that there were eight adults waiting on and serving this boy of six. When asked why her child did not talk, the negro "mammy" replied that he was so rich he didn't have to talk; and we felt that her solution was probably the correct one. There was no need in his life which could not be supplied by some member of the family, if they used a bit of initiative in figuring out what it was he wanted. He was, however, developing violent spells of temper under this system of "training" and bad handling, and it was mainly for this that he was brought to us for study. Two months' proper attention sufficed to give this boy fairly good speech, thus showing that he had been "thinking" in English a good while; but his phonation was slovenly and a great many letter-sound substitutions persisted for some time. Another child of this type was a little girl of two, of an upper middle class family, who had been assiduously attended by her mother and an aunt. One day when this child had been opposed in some small way, she had suddenly stiffened and become white and quite rigid. After that, of course, she was never thwarted in any wish, and developed the habit of going into these semispasmodic states at the slightest hint of opposition. She had not been permitted to crawl—clothes would get dirty—and had not learned to walk. In two months this child was taught to walk and to speak. In less than that time she was making efforts at sentence construction and elaborate compound words.

There is another type of delayed speech due also to bad training,

but much more subtle, more serious, and less amenable to reëducation. Sometime during early infancy the child has had one of the more serious diseases—very often whooping cough—which seemed gravely to threaten the child's development. The parents have been told that they must never cross the child and as this advice falls in very well with their own way of thinking, it is usually followed absolutely. Such children, of course, dominate their environment, selecting only very poor and infantile diets, usually composed of milk and the simplest gruels. They are usually markedly rachitic, and their muscle movement is spastic and faulty. They often have several types of pseudolanguage consisting of half a dozen to a dozen sounds, and are usually classed among the cases of oral inactivity on account of the faultiness of their speech sounds. But they are essentially cases of delayed speech and must first be treated as such.

A fifth type is a combination of any of the first three conditions with bad training. Low intelligence, or brain injury, or glandular anomaly, unless of the severest order, may not prevent a certain amount of effective speech; but low intelligence, or brain injury, or glandular anomaly, *plus* parents who are untrained or indifferent or inclined in difficult situations to offer excuses for their own failures, is a very unfortunate combination for the child. The parent will very often assert that the lack of speech is due to poor intelligence or brain injury or glandular condition. But when you see a child of five, assisting with her own dressing, and having sufficient intelligence to go to the ice chest, open the ice chest door, and select her favorite foods, you may safely infer that her lack of speech is not so much due to low intelligence as to lack of proper training for speech. It is extremely common to find parents justifying their own incapability for training by "rationalizing" from a *real* illness or disability of the child. It is also not uncommon to find parents "rationalizing" from a purely *fictional* condition—a supposedly weak heart or tendency to spasms or something of that sort.

The fundamental training for speech is not phonetic training, but the systematic and diplomatic giving of motives for attaining speech. Having given the child experience of speech, plus an active impulse for acquiring it, the child will, even if mentally below *par*, almost invariably be the strongest ally in the struggle to develop speech.

LETTER-SOUND SUBSTITUTION

The letter-sound substitutions are those in which one speech sound is substituted for another speech sound—whatever the cause of this substitution may be. The most common of these, known as a lisp, is the substitution of *th* in its voiced or voiceless form for *s* or for *z*. After the lisp comes, probably, the substitution of voiceless *l* for *s*. This is usually called a lateral lisp. The difficulty known as lallation is classified in this group; it is usually the substitution in which one of the sounds *l* or *w* is substituted for *r*. Miss Ida C. Ward of the University of London discusses in her lectures the following substitutions, giving them not as a complete list, but as the commonest forms of substitution:

- s* becomes *th* or *sh* or voiceless *l* or voiceless *n* or voiceless *r*,
or the glottal stop;
- sh* becomes voiceless *l*;
- r* becomes *w* or *v*;
- l* becomes *w*;
- th* voiced becomes *w* or *d*;
- th* voiceless becomes *y*;
- y* becomes *r*.

The most common causes of letter-sound substitution are: (1) infantilism, and (2) confusion in training.

Infantilism. This type of letter-sound substitution was first partially described by Dr. Edward Scripture under the name of neuritic lisp. The individual does not wish to detach himself from his infantile surroundings. He retains the speech or some of the forms of speech which he could legitimately retain up to, perhaps, three years of age, and this infantile speech is persisted in as a bond between him and his early environment. To illustrate: A woman of thirty came to us with a simple substitution of *th* for *s*, an extremely common type of infantile substitution. She wished to enter the work of speech correction. In conferring about her qualifications for the course and her training, we discovered that she was already doing platform reading of a high order. When we asked her to read for us in order that we might see how much her

letter-sound substitution interfered with her platform work, we discovered that she read without a trace of this substitution. We asked her why in platform work she should throw off this substitution and retain it in her everyday speech. Her answer, with a distinct lisp was: "My father likes me to talk this way; he says it is sweet and that I am still his little girl." This attitude, while more frankly stated and more conscious with this woman than is usual, is the customary, conscious or unconscious, attitude of the lisper or of the person who makes the simpler substitutions. This clinging to early childhood and the unwillingness, in at least this one respect, to grow up is the fault; rarely is there any lack of ability to make the sound. Every person of good intelligence who retains a faultily made simple English consonant in adult speech certainly suggests infantilism, and especially is this true if he minimizes the importance of eradicating the defect. This one point is of great importance to teachers of public speaking and platform work in general, as it is not at all uncommon to have college students and even older persons say, "I did lisp when I was younger, but have gotten over it," whereas the lisp is still present, but not perceived by the lisper.

Confusion in Training. This is mainly due to parents' and teachers' ignorance of phonetics. In this connection, it is necessary to remember that speech is a learned process. The prevalence of disorders resulting from confused training indicates the necessity for a knowledge of phonetics; and this knowledge of phonetics is needed not only by parents and grade teachers, but also by teachers of public speaking, who are training the speech of future parents and teachers. Many persons who are educated above the use of "fine language" are still guilty of "fine phonetics," at least in theory. Either they speak always in exaggerated strong forms, attempting to give full value to the consonants and vowels, or their speech is normal but they labor under the delusion that they are giving full value to consonants and vowels. This fallacy of giving full value to consonants and vowels is due, I believe, mainly to our confused English spelling, which is but a poor and always very misleading guide to correct pronunciation.

For the purpose of study, the flow of speech-sound has been analyzed into quite arbitrary units. Actually there is no division of speech smaller than the phrase. The word is an arbitrary unit,

the syllable is an arbitrary unit, the separate sound is an arbitrary unit. The correction of a child's speech, if based on these arbitrary and misunderstood units, causes great confusion. Take, for instance, the phrase "that is exactly why." The phrase is spoken in one breath. It contains four words, six syllables, and sixteen letters. The first two letters are *t* and *h*. These stand neither for *t* nor for *h*, but for *th*, which is a voiced consonant. The *a* in "that" fairly follows the spelling. The *i* in "is," in the phrase as spoken, is silent. The word "eks-akt-li" is actually "igzakli." The initial *e* becomes *i*. *x* is commonly understood and thought of as representing *ks*. The *k* and *s* represented by *x* become *gz*. The *t* is silent. In the final word, "why," *w* and *h* are used to represent the voiceless *w*. *y* represents the diphthong composed of *a* as in "past" in careful American speech, and *i* as in "sit." The symbol *h* is thrown in to indicate the voiceless quality of *w*. Now, if this phrase is spoken rapidly, it will be observed that these omissions and changes belong to the correct sounding of this speech unit. If in answer to the question "Is that exactly what you intend to do?" the response "exactly" is given, the word may even be so shortened that the *e* is omitted entirely. The word "exactly" then stands as "gzakli."¹ Thus we have:

"That is exactly why."

t h	a	t	i s	e x	a	k t	l y	w h	y
th	a	t	- z	i - g z	a	k	l i	w (voiceless)	a i

It is obvious that confusion in the child's mind is bound to be the result of teaching him language on such false assumptions as this of a quite imaginary "correct" pronunciation of "exactly." The mother says to the child, "Don't say 'gzakli,' say 'eksaktly.'" The child attempts to pronounce it in that fashion, and adds: "Is that right?" The mother says: "gzakli." The child feels that the whole process is confused, some trick is not being explained to him; and when this fiction is presented to a sensitive child of keen perception, the confusion is great. It is very common to hear the

¹These two pronunciations of "exactly" are taken from Daniel Jones's *English Pronouncing Dictionary*, London, 1917.

statement, "My child cannot spell and yet he has the most accurate ear." When you inquire how the child is taught to spell, you find that it is by some system of sounds, not by rote memory. If taught to spell by sound, it is to be expected that the more accurate the child's perception of sound and the keener his intelligence, the greater will be his confusion—when twenty-six letters of the alphabet are made to stand for between twenty-one and twenty-three consonant sounds, thirteen pure vowel sounds, five standard diphthongs, five to seven non-standard diphthongs, and about three to five triphthongs, making in all between fifty and fifty-five separate combinations and movements. And in addition to this, all these vowel sounds are represented by "*a-e-i-o-u* and sometimes *w* and *y*"; while the diphthongs are often represented by single symbols. as the diphthong which is our first person singular *I*, and the diphthong which is our name for the first letter of the alphabet *a*, and the diphthong which is the name of the letter usually written *o*. Still another source of confusion is the representation of many of these sounds by several different letters; this in addition to the fact that many of the sounds have no representation at all in a great number of words. For instance, our very common sound *y*, which is occasionally written thus, occurs in the words, "William" and "onion" represented by *i*, and in the word "union" represented by both *u* and *i*, but in a few words is not represented at all. Such complete confusion in sounds and spellings cannot but lead to poor spelling unless spelling is taught as a matter of rote memory; and any pronunciation based on a theory that our spelling is an accurate transcription of speech sounds is bound to lead to fundamentally incorrect pronunciations and hence to speech difficulties of a most unnecessary but disabling kind.

One of the causes most commonly assigned for letter-sound substitution is malocclusion of the teeth and poor dental arch. Yet it is our experience that a very large percentage of persons who have poor arch and malocclusion experience no difficulty whatsoever with the sounds of the English language. With the exception of one single condition of malocclusion, a marked protrusion of the lower jaw, we feel that none of these conditions entitles the possessor to a speech difficulty. A careful study of a number of cases of malocclusion will show that a high percentage have good speech. Careful

study of a large number of cases of letter-sound substitution will show that a large percentage have good arch and occlusion. We must, therefore, seek the cause of this speech disorder elsewhere.

ORAL INACTIVITIES

When an attempt was made to describe and then to classify the speech defects remaining after the letter-sound substitutions had been subtracted, it was found that in a large number of cases the word "inactivity" occurred as a descriptive term. This term was modified by naming the parts involved, and so the term "oral inactivities" was used to cover this entire group, with such subdivisions as, oral inactivity-lips, oral inactivity-jaw, oral inactivity-soft palate, oral inactivity-tongue; and in the last named subdivision the tongue inactivity was further classified into back and front.

Very comprehensive case histories were made of a large number of persons with this defect, and some interesting facts came to light. One of the particularly interesting discoveries was that in the entire group of cases those showing true oral inactivity of the front of the tongue gave a history of having had severe nutritional disorders, usually during the second or third years of life. Uniformly they showed anomalies of diet lasting over a number of years.

The diagnosis of oral inactivity is made somewhat complicated by the fact that the weakness of one part of the tongue or of one muscle group makes it mechanically easy to make a clear-cut letter-sound substitution. To illustrate: In a letter-sound substitution the substitution may be *th* for *s*. The same muscle group is involved. The substitution quite obviously is not due to weakness of that muscle group, for in oral inactivity the front of the tongue would definitely remain inactive. However, if the word "cat" be undertaken, *k*, the first sound, is made by the back of the tongue, *a* has the tongue flat in the mouth, but *t* is made by raising the tongue at the front. Where the front of the tongue is weak, the individual will attempt to substitute some sound which does not involve the use of the front of the tongue. This may be *k*, or it may be *p*, which is made with the lips; but it will not be a sound made by a movement of the same muscle group. Oral inactivity of the jaw deserves a special treatment. It is apparently very closely related to the psychological defects, such as

stuttering, and is rarely amenable to practice or drill with the jaw itself, but is often ameliorated by an analysis of the emotions.

Oral inactivity bears some close relation to stuttering. Just what the circle of relationship is, is not yet entirely clear, but it is evident to those working with defects of speech that it is relatively easy to throw a person suffering with oral inactivity over into stuttering, if the treatment is not judicious. A child suffering with oral inactivity cannot with safety be given direct phonetic treatment. By direct phonetic treatment is meant the teaching of the exact positions for and the practice of the disconnected sounds. For the young child, the sounds must be put into plays and games, while the emphasis is, of course, put on the manner in which the games or plays are executed. Children with oral inactivity of the tongue often present a rather typical picture, showing mild symptoms of rickets, mildly spastic gait, "bleached" effect in coloring, and with behavior usually either markedly timid or representing an overcompensated timidity in the form of boldness. Of course, with this temperament, injudicious handling might conceivably develop stuttering, even though oral inactivity were not present. But in addition to the temperamental difficulties, the child suffers from correction by all the adults in his environment and by his disorder is handicapped in his contact with other children.

VOCAL DIFFICULTIES

Vocal difficulties present possibly the greatest diversity found in any of the classifications of defects of speech. It may safely be said that there are as many causes as there are persons with difficulties. Weak voice, a very common complaint, will have not one common cause, but a different cause in each of the half-dozen cases that you may be studying. One is more convinced of the absolute necessity of a complete and thorough physical examination for vocal difficulties than for almost any other defects. In no other field of speech correction may so much harm be done by slapdash methods. Certain of these difficulties are distinctly due to defects of personality. Others of them are due to general physical disabilities. Very few are due to actual difficulties with the vocal cords themselves.

Nasal Voice. Nasality may be correctly classed with the phonetic difficulties. The soft palate should be open in three of the English

sounds, *m*, *n*, and *ng*. Due to the laws of assimilation of sounds, a certain amount of nasality is present in any sound in juxtaposition to *m*, *n*, or *ng*. In making all other sounds the soft palate is closed in such a way as to separate the mouth and the nasal chamber. Nasality occurs when the soft palate is relaxed and dropped into an open position during the other sounds of speech. It is, therefore, correctly classed as an oral inactivity under the subhead of soft palate, and treated as a phonetic disability. The nasal voice, however, seems to belong to a recognizable personal type. It is typical of a certain bumptious personality, and also it is the essence of the whine that characterizes other individuals. These findings suggest at once the necessity for general modification of the personality in order to relieve the vocal defect, for although one may by phonetic treatment mitigate the difficulty, unless the underlying cause in the personality is changed, a relapse is almost certain.

Negative Nasality. Negative nasality is the opposition of nasal voice and is caused by the closing of the soft palate when the nasal consonant should be made. It results in the substitution of *b* for *m*, *d* for *n*, and *g* for *ng*—giving the effect of a cold in the head. As it commonly accompanies enlarged adenoids, negative nasality is also commonly called the “adenoid type” of speech.

Harsh Voice. The defect commonly classified as a harsh voice is usually due to extreme psychological tension. It often belongs to what is called the “hypomaniac type” of personality, the person whose power and push and “pep” are excessive. Its exaggerated form is seen in the insane patient whose flow of activity is extreme and whose voice is harsh, high pitched, and usually somewhat hoarse from excessive use. Harsh voice, in a mild form, is found in the Northwest and Middlewest in a great many speakers who use the inverted vowel, commonly thought by the users to be a form of the consonant *r*. In English the consonant *r* is correctly used only when followed by a vowel. An attempt to add the so-called final *r* to words which are not followed by a vowel, or to insert the *r* in words where it is followed by a consonant, results in what is known to phoneticians as the inverted vowel, or vowel *r*. The tongue takes a position of great tension, the throat is tensed, and the whole vocalization is greatly modified. The vowel *r* is a very distinct voice deformity in the speech of many persons using this widespread dialectal form. A large

number of freshmen in a university of the Middlewest, in answering a questionnaire on their speech, complained that they could not pronounce the final *r*; and instructors and other well-educated people sent a surprising number of students to have this "defect" remedied.

Flat Tonal Quality. This peculiar flat quality of the voice usually has one of two causes. The first is a marked inactivity of the jaw. As the jaw is held rigid, the resonating chambers are not correctly used. For a time we attempted to modify this disorder by direct work on the relaxation of the jaw. After a series of failures, and further observation, we concluded that all of these individuals suffered from a certain type of timidity and that treatment based on that finding might legitimately be undertaken. Working on the difficulty in personality, we were able to obtain a modification of the tone quality in a limited number of educable cases.

The second cause of flat tonal quality is poor hearing. Sometimes this poor hearing is a thing of the past, having prevailed during early childhood or early adolescence. But more often, it is still present or is in a progressive condition, and while the patient is more or less conscious of some disability in speech, he does not know exactly what the difficulty is. Flat tonal quality is very likely to accompany middle ear involvement. The condition is quite amenable to treatment if the difficulty with hearing has not progressed so far that the patient's capacity for self-criticism is impaired. Work with this disorder is worth while as the deaf are so often cut off from active social and professional life quite needlessly by the secondary characteristics of deafness.

The Loud Voice. The loud voice with a certain booming over-resistant quality is usually present in the individual whose keen sense of timidity or inferiority has caused a marked overcompensation. This sort of camouflage for a real feeling of fear is most often an unconscious mechanism. Something can be done by convincing such an individual that this type of voice is ineffectual, but little permanent improvement is likely to be made without modifying the underlying difficulty of personality and without some insight into causes.

The Soft Breathly Inadequate Voice. This voice is often the direct result of some malady involving the lungs, and is very common in the tubercular. Vocal drill or breathing exercises should **never**

be given until a competent physician has made a thorough examination. A person with a mild tubercular lesion that is holding and building up its own protective tissue might be very seriously injured by deep breathing and other exercises requiring vigorous use of the lungs. If the physician finds the lungs sound, the slow reëducation of the individual, both for his personality and for the actual vocal disability, should be begun. Certain types of introverted, timid persons also commonly have this voice. The correction of this condition requires longer training than for any of the other vocal disabilities; two years should be considered a very moderate requirement.

The Hoarse Voice. The underlying cause of an extremely hoarse voice may be a mechanical difficulty in the vocal cords themselves. We have seen one case caused by direct pressure on one cord from a tumor on the other cord. As this could not be modified it was felt that treatment was inadvisable. Rest and avoidance of all unnecessary talking and singing were recommended. Note that this patient did not show hoarse voice until an occasion of extreme emotional tenseness. At the death of a member of the family she cried out; on next attempting to speak the voice had disappeared entirely, and she could only whisper. Very slowly a certain amount of voice was regained. This patient had a slowly developing bronchiectasis, of which she died sixteen years later. Even had the vocal cords permitted training, it might have been fatal to undertake any vocal reëducation with the lung involvement present.

However, the majority of hoarse voices are caused by wrong use. "Speaker's sore throat" is usually caused by using the voice at its maximum capacity during strong emotion, and the hoarse voice of rage, the hoarse voice of fear, the hoarse voice of anxiety, and of the chronic states of fear are commonplace phenomena. The young public speaker who experiences any degree of stage fright, should be instructed in the mechanism of stage fright and its control, and should not be permitted to use his voice at full strength until the period of stage fright has passed, even if this proves a long time. We have been accustomed to think of stage fright as amusing, whereas it is, of all influences, perhaps the most destructive of the proper use of the voice. Another cause of hoarse voice arises from mistaken attempts to obtain emphasis by loudness and softness, whereas em-

phasis should ordinarily be obtained through the use of strong and weak forms of pronunciation. These problems of public speaking have been neglected to a degree unfortunate for good voice as well as for good delivery.

THE SINGING VOICE

The singing voice is rarely considered from the point of view of voice and speech correction. But the assistance which the phonetician and expert in the correction of defective speech can give the singer is gradually being recognized. The singing voice of nasal quality presents an entirely phonetic problem, as does also the singing voice with the negative nasal. The "inverted or vowel *r* used dialectally" is a constant cause of difficulties in singing as well as in speech, and the attempt to use the consonant *r* before consonants is very conducive to trouble. In addition to this fault, emotional interference and lack of insight on the part of singers, frequently cause loss of voice. It is generally assumed that certain privileges of behavior must be allowed the fine singer. The public realizes that the inhibited singer does not sing with freedom and ease, but seems ignorant of the fact that entire "freedom" of behavior is not necessary in order to avoid inhibition. An understanding of the mechanism of the emotions may give a freedom which in no way conflicts with the social tabus and with accepted social behavior. The singer, dealing as he does with emotional expression, needs the freedom that comes with knowledge of the mechanism of the emotions.

SUMMARY

After a study of the various types of speech disorders, the investigator is most impressed with the following facts and conditions:

1. The necessity of considering first the personality of the individual, not only in the nervous cases of stuttering and the rate cases, but in all cases of defective speech. No program of reëducation should be undertaken without first considering the psychological slant and the emotional life of the patient. No work from the point of view of phonetics or voice placing is of permanent value where the underlying abnormality in personality has not been relieved, or at least modified.

2. The almost universal ignorance of correct phonetic forms, and the resulting harm of attempts to give phonetics and pronunciation without definite knowledge of what actually is occurring in speech.

3. The confusion in infancy and early childhood, resulting from the general belief that speech is inherited. This belief results in ignorance of the proper methods of training, and prevents a right understanding of speech as only one series of specialized movements which cannot be separated from the general bodily movements and general postural tensions.

After a number of years spent in the work of speech correction we are more than ever firmly convinced that the study of speech must include not only a detailed study of the sounds of speech as they actually occur in the act of speaking (not in some theoretical and idealized variation), but also a study of the formation of habits and of the development and normalizing of personality.

A PSYCHOLOGICAL VIEW OF ARGUMENTATION

WILLIAM E. UTTERBACK

HERBERT SPENCER opened the argument of his essay on the philosophy of Style with this observation:

No general theory of expression seems yet to have been enunciated. The maxims contained in works on composition and rhetoric are presented in an unorganized form. Standing as isolated dogmas—as empirical generalizations, they are neither so clearly apprehended, nor so much respected, as they would be were they deduced from some simple first principle. . . . In this, as in other cases, conviction will be greatly strengthened when we understand the *why*. And we may be sure that a comprehension of the general principle from which the rules of composition result, will not only bring them home to us with greater force, but will discover to us other rules of like origin.¹

This obvious utility of rhetorical theory has twice in the history of rhetoric prompted the formulation of a body of psychological principles to systematize and explain the rules of the art, both occasions marking an important step in its development. The history of rhetoric, like that of many another science, begins with Aristotle. He constructed out of Aristotelian psychology the theoretical foundation which first elevated rhetoric from the status of a craft to the dignity of a science. After Aristotle no substantial advance was made in the science of psychology for twenty-one centuries, and it was accordingly not until the advent in the eighteenth century of the "faculty" psychology of Wolff and Tetons that rhetoricians felt the need of reconstruction. Tetons' tripartite division of the mind into the independent "faculties," emotion, reason, and will, then became the basis of a new rhetorical structure developed by Whately and others.

In spite of the enormous strides which psychology has made since the eighteenth century the theory of rhetoric formulated at that time has continued in vogue up to the present day. There is, however, a growing conviction that recent developments in psychology make it

¹ *The Philosophy of Style*, New York, 1920, p. 10.

possible and desirable to undertake again the restatement of basic rhetorical theory. Several students, notably James A. Winans¹ and C. H. Woolbert,² have already addressed themselves to this task of reconstruction. This paper represents an attempt to contribute to the solution of the problem by examining the psychological basis of that portion of rhetoric usually discussed under the head of "argumentation."

I

Argumentation is ordinarily defined as "the art of convincing others by reasoned discourse." We must here emphasize "reasoned" because the use of suggestion and emotional appeal will often convince, at least temporarily, and we wish to exclude these rhetorical methods from the scope of this paper. We are concerned here only with spoken or written discourse which attempts to convince and which does so by proposing "reasons" why the hearer or reader should accept a proposition as true. When we speak of "convincing others," we may mean either one of two quite different things. A speaker may desire to induce in his hearer that momentary state of mind with reference to an idea which leads the hearer to accept it at the time as true, to say, while the idea is in his conscious mind, "I believe, I accept your proposition." On the other hand, the speaker may desire so to affect his hearer's thinking that if his proposition should enter the hearer's mind at some time in the future, it will bring with it that state of mind which constitutes acceptance of the idea. This distinction between the two purposes of argumentation is so useful that it will be worth while to designate each by a separate term. Such words as belief, conviction, acceptance, assent, etc., which might be expected to serve us here, have been worn so smooth by careless and long-continued use that they are used almost interchangeably in ordinary speech. Suppose, therefore, that we somewhat arbitrarily say, let belief be the momentary acceptance of an idea which is at the time in the field of consciousness; and let conviction be that predisposition which determines that when a given idea enters the mind it will bring with it the state of belief. A conviction is thus a potential, or quiescent, belief.

¹ See James A. Winans, *Public Speaking*, New York, 1920, ch. VIII, IX.

² See C. H. Woolbert, "Persuasion: Principles and Methods," *Quarterly Journal of Speech Education*, V (1919), 12-25, 101-19, 212-38.

Belief and conviction are psychological phenomena. It is in terms of psychology that they may be most fully understood. If psychology can explain the nature of belief and conviction, and more especially if it can tell us the conditions necessary to produce them in another, we will have a basis upon which to erect a theory of argumentation. First, then, let us examine the nature of belief and the conditions necessary to produce it.

Viewed psychologically, belief is an aspect of attention. That is, any idea which prevails stably in the focus of attention is believed. If the reader could hold steadily in the center of attention the idea that the world is flat, he would, for the time at least, believe as implicitly in that doctrine as do Voliva and his followers at Zion City. As James says, "The most compendious possible formula perhaps would be that *our belief and attention* are the same fact. For the moment, what we attend to is reality."¹ And Pillsbury agrees: "Personally I can discover in a moment of belief nothing but the stable persistence of the idea or state that is believed."²

When put thus baldly the proposition does not at first appear plausible. Someone objects: by an effort of the Will I can concentrate my attention for a few seconds upon any idea, however absurd, for example, that my name is Napoleon; but I do not therefore believe that I am Napoleon. No, but the idea that you are Napoleon does not *prevail stably* in the focus of attention; you are holding it there precariously by an effort of the Will. Relax your effort for the fraction of a second and the idea will disappear from the focus of attention. A slightly different objection may be illustrated as follows: I believe that this is the month of December, and yet at the same time I have in mind the idea that it may possibly be May. I am giving my attention to both ideas at the same time, but I cannot believe in both at the same time for they are contradictory. True, the idea that this is May is in your mind, but it is not in the *focus of attention*. The field of attention may be likened to the circle of light thrown on the ground by a street lamp. The brightly illumined center, corresponding to the focus of attention, shades off imperceptibly into darkness in every direction. It is quite possible for an idea to exist in this twilight fringe while an opposing idea occupies the focus of attention, though this may not often happen under

¹ William James, *Psychology*, New York, 1890, p. 322 n.

² W. B. Pillsbury, *The Psychology of Reasoning*, New York, 1910, p. 57.

normal conditions. It is only while in the focus of attention that an idea gives rise to that state of mind we call belief. This objection suggests another: is it possible for two mutually contradictory ideas to occupy the focus of attention at the same time?

A ten minute introspection will convince one that contradictory ideas cannot prevail stably in the focus of attention at the same time. Either one is in the focus and the other in the fringe of attention, or the two alternate in the focus of attention. One other objection may be worth noticing. It may be argued that one can for a few seconds force into the focus of attention an entirely colorless idea, which is neither believed nor disbelieved, as for example, that this coin will fall heads up. Is this really belief? No, but here again the idea that the coin will fall heads up does not *prevail stably* in the focus of attention. Relax the Will and it will quickly flicker out, not, in this case, due to the competition of opposing ideas, but because it lacks the emotional intensity necessary to maintain it in the focus of attention. As James says, "The idea to be consented to must be kept from flickering and going out. It must be held steadily before the mind until it *fills* the mind. Such filling of the mind by an idea, with its congruous associates, *is* consent to the idea and to the fact which the idea represents."¹

The mere definition of belief in terms of attention does not throw much light on rhetorical method. The rhetorician is concerned, not with the phenomenon of attention itself, but with the means of inducing it. The conditions of attention then are what we must seek to understand.

Obviously the first condition of attention is the initial entrance into consciousness of the idea attended to. This may take place in any one of three ways. (a) An idea already in the focus of attention arouses a dormant idea with which it is connected, and the idea thus awakened succeeds the first in consciousness. This is the familiar phenomenon of association. (b) As the result of little understood subconscious processes an idea may be precipitated abruptly into consciousness, putting to rout any ideas which it may find there. (c) An idea may be called to the surface of consciousness by an external stimulus, *i.e.*, by the perception of an object in the physical environment or by spoken or written speech. This last condition, the perception of the spoken or written word, is the only one over which the

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 564.

rhetorician can exercise control and is consequently the only one with which we are here concerned.

When an idea has been called into the conscious field, two conditions determine whether it will quickly lapse from attention or will "fill the mind" with that persistent stability which constitutes belief. The first condition is that the idea must possess a very considerable emotional intensity. An emotionally colorless idea will not prevail stably in the focus of attention. If the idea of the desirability of a protective tariff on steel occurs to, or is brought to the attention of, an illiterate farm laborer, belief in the desirability of a tariff will not result. The idea lacks the emotional energy necessary to maintain it in the focus of attention. The laborer may humor you by concentrating his mind on the idea for a few seconds, but leave him to his own devices and almost at once "tariff" slips from his attention. But when the same idea enters the conscious mind of a stockholder in the United States Steel Corporation, it is highly charged with emotional energy and will hold a secure place in the center of attention.

If we were permitted to pry into the mind of the investor in steel, we would find that the idea of the desirability of a protective tariff forms a part of a complex system of ideas built up around the concept of private gain. The mental elements composing this system, including perhaps such diverse ideas as those of the desirability of voting the Republican ticket and the undesirability of balloon tires, are united more or less perfectly by the bond of logical consistency. All of its elements have a bearing on the central theme, private gain. But the system is also united by the bond of emotional congruity. Each element in the system shares to at least some degree in the affective tone, or emotional charge, if we may call it so, of the entire system. ✓ The amount of energy possessed by any element will depend upon the closeness of its connection with the core of the complex. Our conception of the structure of the mind then must be that of an intricate reticular structure, roughly organized into systems on the basis of logical consistency and drawing from the primitive instincts, about which the systems are built up, a supply of emotional energy, or "psychic energy," as Tansley prefers to call it. When an element of one of these emotionally charged systems enters consciousness it possesses, by virtue of its logical connection with the system, the emotional intensity necessary to its maintenance in the focus of attention.

The desirability of a protective tariff on steel does not form a

part of any active system of ideas in the mind of the illiterate farm laborer. Neither does the idea of free trade on steel. But suppose that we point out to him that free trade on steel would lower the price of farm implements, which in turn would enable his employer to raise the wages of his hired help. The idea of the desirability of free trade on steel, which has now been incorporated into that active system of ideas centering about personal gain, henceforth shares the emotional energy of that system; for the emotional content of the system may be conceived of as a charge of energy capable of being transmitted from one element to another over the connecting pathways of the mental structure somewhat as electrical energy is transmitted from cell to cell in a circuit. Hume's picturesque figure expresses the same thought: "The vividness of the first conception diffuses itself along the relations and is conveyed, as by so many pipes or channels, to every idea that has any communication with the primary one."¹

We may lay down then as the second condition of attention a logical connection between the idea attended to and supporting systems of ideas from which it can draw the emotional energy necessary to its maintenance in the focus of attention.

The degree of emotional intensity possessed by an idea in the focus of attention of course varies greatly, and with it varies the intensity of the resultant belief. One may readily observe that of two beliefs one is believed more, or, as James would say, has a greater "sting of reality" than the other. Most college students, for example, believe both that molecules exist and that the varsity football team should be loyally supported; but the latter belief is a much more real and vivid one. It would be fair to say that in a sense the student believes the latter belief more than the first. The difference between the two ideas (in our terms) is that the one is more highly charged with emotional energy than the other. James recognized this significance of the emotional content of an idea in determining degree of belief. "The more a conceived object *excites* us, the more reality it has. . . . Moral and religious truths come 'home' to us far more on some occasions than on others. . . . The 'depth' [heightened belief] is partly, no doubt, the insight into wider systems of unified relation, but far more often than that it is the emotional thrill."²

¹David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, London, 1882, p. 420.

²*Op. cit.*, p. 307.

To the conditions of attention already enumerated (the initial presence in consciousness of the idea attended to and its connection with supporting systems from which it can draw emotional energy) we must add a third; namely, freedom from competing or inhibitory ideas. It has been frequently pointed out by Tansley and others that an emotionally charged idea in the focus of attention tends to call into consciousness other ideas sharing its characteristic emotional tone. But this tendency of the dominant idea to invite the appearance in consciousness of emotionally congruous ideas is no more significant than its corresponding tendency to inhibit the emotionally *incongruous* idea. This obverse aspect of the truth Tansley does not seem to have sufficiently noticed. The earlier psychologists, however, have frequently pointed it out. Speaking of the emotional state generated by the presence in consciousness of an emotionally charged idea, Bain says, "In a state of strong excitement, no thoughts are allowed to present themselves except such as concur in the present mood; the links of association are paralyzed as regards everything that conflicts with the ascendant influence."¹ And later, "... whenever a feeling strongly occupies the mind, the objects in harmony with it are maintained in the view, and all others repelled and ignored."² James, likewise, states that "When any strong emotional state whatever is upon us, the tendency is for no images but such as are congruous with it to come up. If others by chance offer themselves, they are instantly smothered and crowded out."³ Since each of the great systems of the mind has its characteristic affective tone, it commonly happens that logical incompatibility between two ideas is accompanied by emotional incongruity. The practical consequence is that a highly charged idea in the focus of attention inhibits less robust contradictory ideas which might dispute its possession of the conscious field. This fact may be abundantly illustrated from common experience. During the war the evidence against German atrocities in Belgium simply did not occur to the "hundred per cent American." When objections to his cherished belief in the atrocities were forcibly brought to his attention, they seemed pale and unimportant and quickly dropped from sight.

If the supremacy of an idea in the focus of attention is challenged

¹ Alexander Bain, *The Emotions and the Will*, London, 1880, p. 20.

² *Ibid.*, p. 523.

³ *Op. cit.*, p. 563.

by the appearance of an inhibitory idea which enjoys equally good or better support than the first, *i.e.*, which is connected with a more active system of ideas or by better established channels, a struggle between the two ideas ensues. Belief gives way to doubt. When two or more conflicting ideas compete for exclusive possession of the field of attention, first one and then the other enjoying temporary possession, we "deliberate." This state of doubt and vacillation continues until one idea succeeds in displacing the other or a third appears capable of resolving the contradiction. Speaking of the oscillation of the mind between two incompatible interpretations or solutions of a problem, Pillsbury says, ". . . as different systems come into prominence successively, the attitude toward the construct will vary and with this variation the interpretation fluctuates and the consequent doubt supervenes."¹ "Again, one may believe in socialism if one considers the evident disparity between the rewards of different individuals who may be regarded as of the same ability or as of the same degree of desert. One is firmly opposed to socialism when men are regarded as essentially very different in ability, and ability and desert are identified, or it is assumed that men differ in their deserts as completely as they do in ability. Just so long as the two sets of experience fluctuate before the mind, one will be in doubt as to which of the abstract principles is the more desirable. When one persists, it is by that very fact believed."² In a case of this kind one system may triumph for a time only to be displaced at last by the other. The individual's belief at a given moment depends upon which system is in the ascendancy: ". . . belief grows from harmony of a particular interpretation with the total experience active at the moment."³

Complete freedom from inhibitory ideas of course seldom occurs in one's thinking about practical affairs. The most earnest believer in States' rights is aware of objections to that doctrine. While these objections are not sufficiently strong to dislodge the idea, they do weaken his belief somewhat. The intensity of a belief varies indirectly with the number and intensity of the inhibitory ideas which oppose it.

If we had begun our discussion of the conditions of attention

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 42.

² *Ibid.*, p. 38.

³ W. B. Pillsbury, *Attention*, New York, 1908, p. 169.

by assuming the existence in the focus of attention of an emotionally charged idea, freedom from inhibitory ideas would have appeared the only indispensable condition of attention and, therefore, of belief. This conclusion is confirmed by James's, Scott's, and Pillsbury's analyses of belief. The state of belief, according to these psychologists, is passive. Any idea of which we may conceive, *i.e.*, which is sufficiently active to remain in consciousness, is by that very fact believed unless contradicted by another idea. According to Scott, "*Every idea that is suggested to the mind is held as truth, unless inhibited by some contradictory idea.*"¹ "The sense that anything we think of is unreal," says James, "can only come, then, when that thing is contradicted by some other thing of which we think. *Any object which remains uncontradicted is ipso facto believed and posited as absolute reality.*"² And again, ". . . all propositions, whether attributive or existential, are believed through the very fact of being conceived, unless they clash with other propositions believed at the same time."³ Pillsbury says, "Anything that enters the mind is normally at once accepted as true."⁴

This analysis of belief may be summed up in the following set of conclusions. (1) Belief is an aspect of attention. (2) The conditions of attention are (a) the initial entrance into consciousness of the idea believed, (b) a connection between this idea and supporting ideational systems from which it can draw the emotional energy necessary for its maintenance in the focus of attention, (c) freedom from inhibitory ideas. (3) The intensity of a belief varies directly with the degree of emotional intensity which it possesses and indirectly with the number and intensity of the inhibitory ideas which oppose it.

It now becomes necessary to return to the distinction between belief (the momentary acceptance of an idea which is at the time in the focus of attention) and conviction (the predisposition to accept a given idea whenever it may appear in consciousness). In what does conviction consist and what are the conditions necessary to produce it? The first half of this question has already been answered. A conviction is a potential belief, a predisposition which determines

¹ W. D. Scott, *The Psychology of Public Speaking*, Philadelphia, 1907, p. 154.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 288.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 290.

⁴ *The Psychology of Reasoning*, p. 31.

that when a given idea enters the conscious mind it will enjoy that stable position in the focus of attention which constitutes belief. But what is this predisposition? What do we really mean when we refer to a person's conviction in favor of the World Court? We mean that the mental elements composing the conceptual systems of his mind are so organized that whenever the idea of the World Court enters his conscious mind it will be unimpeded by inhibitory ideas and will be connected with systems of ideas from which it can draw the emotional support necessary to its maintenance in the focus of attention; in other words, we mean that when the idea of the World Court enters his mind it will enjoy that undivided attention which constitutes belief. Argumentation is the process of reorganizing the hearer's conceptual systems to insure a given idea freedom from inhibitory ideas and connection with supporting conceptual systems. This process of reorganization not only results immediately in acceptance of the idea supported by the argument, but "sets the stage" for the future triumph of the same idea. In other words, an argumentative speech which produces belief will at the same time produce conviction; and only new argument tending to reestablish the old system of concepts can destroy it. It is true that a belief accepted in the presence of the speaker may lose intensity when the personal influence is withdrawn; but this is merely a case in which two conceptual systems are of almost equal strength, and the persuasive power of personality becomes the decisive factor; hence this case points to no real difference between the process of securing belief and the process of securing conviction. Since this is true, the three conditions of attention may be safely taken as a basis for a theory of argumentation.

II

Corresponding to the three conditions of attention there are three steps in the total process of inducing belief or conviction: (a) calling the idea to be accepted into the conscious mind of the hearer, (b) connecting that idea with conceptual systems from which it can derive sufficient emotional energy to maintain it in the field of attention, and (c) the disposal of inhibitory ideas; or, in the rhetorician's terms, the statement of the speaker's proposition, constructive argument, and refutation. An analysis of the subject-audience situation will in each case determine which of these processes must be em-

ployed. For example, a speaker desiring to convince an undergraduate audience of the value of following a daily schedule of study would probably employ all three. A plain statement of the speaker's proposition would suffice to call to mind the idea of adherence to a daily schedule; it would then be necessary to connect this idea with some strong system of ideas in the hearer's mind, perhaps that of extracurricular activity or scholastic standing; and finally, the speaker must satisfactorily dispose of such objections as may arise in the hearer's mind; for example, the inconvenience of rigid daily schedules, interference with pleasure, etc. If it were desired to convince the same audience of the desirability of a vacation in Europe, constructive argument might possibly be dispensed with entirely; for the idea of a trip to Europe is, for the average student, sufficiently vivid to hold his attention if uninhibited by contradictory ideas. The speaker's problem would lie rather in the refutation of such objections as the expense of the trip, etc. The typical sermon, on the other hand, is usually addressed to hearers who entertain no specific objections to the speaker's proposition. The preacher accordingly devotes his time to connecting his idea with as many sources of emotional energy as possible; his problem is solely one of vivification.

Little need be said of the first step in the argumentative process. If the idea to be presented by the speaker is one already familiar to his hearers, a simple statement will suffice to call it to mind. In what may be called the "direct" mode of speech construction the speaker plainly announces his proposition early in the address and then proceeds to a discussion of the arguments in support of it; *i.e.*, he turns his attention first to the idea which he wishes his hearers to accept and then to the system or systems of ideas with which he wishes to connect it. However this method may be, and frequently is, reversed. The speaker may first discuss the systems, connecting them at the end of the address with his own idea, which is deduced as a conclusion from the preceding argument. If the speaker's proposition is unfamiliar to the audience, the argumentative process must be preceded by exposition.

Constructive argument, or the process of connecting the speaker's proposition with ideational systems from which it can draw the emotional energy necessary to its maintenance in the field of attention, calls for a more detailed discussion. Suppose, for the sake of illustration, that an advocate of free trade, in addressing an audi-

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ence of western farmers, presents an argument to the following general effect: free trade would result in freer competition between local and foreign manufacturers, and freer competition would lower prices. The purpose of the argument is to establish a connection between the idea of free trade and that very active system of ideas built up around the desire for personal gain. The particular part of this system with which the connection can most easily be established is the idea of lower prices. But it is impossible to establish a direct connection between "free trade" and "lower prices." The speaker must make the connection indirectly through the idea "freer competition." As a result of the argument, "free trade" is incorporated into the "personal gain" system and henceforth shares whatever emotional energy that system may possess. In the course of his address the speaker will connect "free trade" with as many other systems as possible with the intention of draining into the idea sufficient energy to induce a state of belief. In selecting the systems with which to connect his idea the speaker will be guided by two considerations: (a) which of the systems available for connection carry the highest charge of energy? and (b) with which systems can he make the surest, *i.e.*, the most logical, connections?

So far as it concerns the rhetorician, logic is the science of connecting two or more ideas for the purpose of intensifying one of them. The three types of argument discussed in texts on logic—deduction, induction, and analogy—are three methods of connecting an idea with a conceptual system. The simple deductive argument cited in the preceding paragraph, when cast into syllogistic form, would run as follows:

Freer competition will cause lower prices;
Free trade will cause freer competition;
Therefore, free trade will result in lower prices.

In psychological terms, this syllogism intensifies the idea of free trade by connecting it with the idea of lower prices through the idea of freer competition. The major premise (freer competition will cause lower prices) establishes a connection between the idea "freer competition" (middle term) and the idea "lower prices" (major term), which is a part of the "personal gain" system. The minor premise (free trade will cause freer competition) establishes a connection between the ideas "freer competition" (middle term) and

"free trade" (minor term). The connection thus established between "free trade" and "lower prices" is expressed in the conclusion of the argument.

The following will serve as an example of inductive argument:

The city manager form of government lowers taxes, for at Dayton, Cleveland, and Buffalo, where the city manager form of government is in operation, taxes are low.

The argument connects "Dayton," "Cleveland," and "Buffalo" first with "city manager government" and then with "lower taxes," thus establishing an indirect connection between "city manager government" and "lower taxes."

We may take as an example of analogical argument:

A city manager form of government at Manchester would lower taxes, for the Dayton city manager government has lowered taxes and the operation of the city manager plan would be similar in the two cities.

The first premise (the Dayton city manager government has lowered taxes) connects the middle and major terms of the syllogism; the second premise (city manager government would operate similarly in the two cities) connects the middle and minor terms. And again the connection thus established between the minor and major terms is expressed in the conclusion of the argument. The only difference between the deductive and the analogical syllogism is that in the former the relation between the minor and middle terms is an "included within" relation, while in the latter it is a "similar to" relation.

The actual process of argument is of course seldom so simple as the preceding discussion might seem to imply. The speaker's idea is usually supported, not by one, but by many syllogisms, either in the form of a chain or a series; and the three types of argument occur in innumerable combinations. In every case, however, the process will be found to consist in the connection of the speaker's idea with one or more conceptual systems from which it can draw the emotional energy necessary to its maintenance in the field of attention. A further complication arises from the fact that many of the premises in an argument are implied rather than expressed. The connections involved in the implication, of course, contribute to the final result quite as surely as do the expressed premises. If the connection between two ideas is already well established, it is unneces-

sary to bring it into consciousness; it operates quite as well subconsciously.

Before leaving the subject of constructive argument, it may be of interest to observe that the process of connecting two ideas for the purpose of intensifying one of them is identical with the process employed in exposition. To explain a new idea is to relate it to ideas or conceptual systems already familiar to the hearer. Suppose, for example, that we wish to explain the term "mullah" to an individual for whom "mullah" has no meaning whatever. The image (visual or auditory) of the word "mullah" constitutes an imagal center about which we will attempt to build up a group of meanings. We begin our explanation with the statement that a mullah is a teacher, thus connecting the imagal center with the familiar idea "teacher." If we continue with the statement, a mullah is a Mohammedan teacher, we have connected the new concept with another familiar idea. If we add, a mullah teaches the laws and dogmas of the Mohammedan religion, we will have established still another connection, and the hearer will by this time have acquired at least some understanding of the new idea; we have built up a rudimentary concept in his mind. The process has been precisely that employed in constructive argument to connect two ideas for the purpose of intensifying one of them. In both cases the new idea has been incorporated into old conceptual systems and shares whatever emotional energy those systems may possess. In constructive argument the speaker is interested primarily in this resultant vivification of the new idea; in exposition he is interested primarily in the incorporation of the new idea into existing systems. Exposition and argument are thus two aspects of the same process; the only difference between them lies in the speaker's purpose. Attempts to distinguish sharply between the *methods* of exposition and argument will never be more successful than that of the orthodox theologian who, when challenged to an argument on the immortality of the soul by his young son, fresh from college, exclaimed, "Young man, the immortality of the soul is not a subject upon which intelligent people argue, but I will *explain* to you how we know the soul is immortal."

Let us turn now to the third step in the argumentative process, the disposal of inhibitory ideas. The most obvious way of disposing of such a competing idea is by cutting it off from the system from which it draws its emotional strength. Suppose that a campaign

speaker, urging the qualifications of Governor X for the presidency of the United States, encounters the objection, "Senator Y is well qualified for the presidency for he is a successful business man." The speaker may attack the minor premise of this syllogism by attempting to convince his audience that Senator Y has not had a successful business career, thus severing the connection between the minor and middle terms; or he may attack the implied major premise by arguing that a successful business career is not a necessary qualification for the presidency, severing the connection between the middle and major terms. In either case he will, if successful, cut off the hostile idea from its supporting system, and it will disappear as a competitor for the hearer's attention.

The second method of disposing of an inhibitory idea consists in accepting it "for the sake of argument," and building upon it an argument in support of another idea which conflicts sharply with one of the hearer's conceptual systems, it being assumed by the speaker that the system thus attacked will prove stronger than the inhibitory idea and the argument built up around it, and will quickly put the latter to rout in the internal struggle which ensues. Robert Ingersoll's *reductio ad absurdum*, employed in a debate with Cardinal Manning, is the classic example of this method. The Cardinal had argued: "Paganism failed to destroy Catholicism by persecution, therefore Catholicism is of divine origin." Attacking the implied major premise of this syllogism (that which withstands persecution must be of divine origin), Ingersoll replied: "Let us make an application of this logic. Paganism failed to destroy Catholicism by persecution, therefore Catholicism is of divine origin. Catholicism failed to destroy Protestantism by persecution, therefore Protestantism is of divine origin. Catholicism and Protestantism combined failed to destroy Infidelity, therefore Infidelity is of divine origin." Here Ingersoll took the inhibitory idea presented by his opponent and built upon it an argument leading to a conclusion (Infidelity is of divine origin) which conflicts violently with the strong system of ideas built up around the orthodox Catholic's conception of the Deity. This deeply rooted system of ideas was doubtless strong enough to put to rout the newly created system composed of Manning's inhibitory idea and Ingersoll's *reductio* of it.

But this method of refutation may be, and usually is, reversed. That is, the speaker starts with a conceptual system well rooted in

the minds of his hearers and builds upon it an argument supporting the antithesis of the inhibitory idea. In the ensuing struggle between the enlarged system and the poorly supported inhibitory idea the latter is quickly vanquished. Suppose, for example, that the speaker urging the qualifications of Governor X for president and encountering the hostile idea "Senator Y would make a desirable president" decides to employ this method. Ignoring the argument supporting the inhibitory idea, he opens his attack with a discussion of the necessity of moral integrity in public officials. Proceeding next to the point that Senator Y's relation to certain corrupt influences has been such as seriously to compromise his integrity, he draws the conclusion that Senator Y would be an undesirable president. The speaker has built upon one of the hearer's conceptual systems an argument supporting a proposition which is antithetical to the inhibitory idea. In the struggle which ensues between the two contradictory ideas the idea of Senator Y's undesirability will, if the speaker has been successful, be sufficiently more intense than the other to drive it from the field. This is the process Pillsbury has in mind when he says, "One can change the belief of any individual . . . by so presenting a statement that it shall arouse a different set of experiences to pass upon the statement."¹

SUMMARY

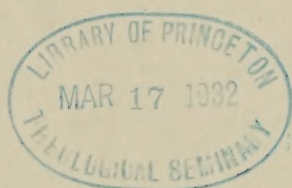
Belief is an aspect of attention; *i.e.*, any idea which prevails stably in the focus of attention is by that very fact believed. The conditions of attention are the initial presence in consciousness of the idea attended to, a connection between the idea and supporting conceptual systems from which it can draw the emotional energy necessary to maintain it in the focus of attention, and freedom from inhibitory ideas. Corresponding to these three conditions of attention there are three steps in the total process of inducing belief or conviction—namely, the statement of the speaker's proposition, constructive argument, and refutation. The statement of the speaker's proposition calls into the hearer's mind the idea which the speaker desires him to accept; constructive argument connects this idea with supporting conceptual systems by the use of deduction, induction, or analogy; refutation disposes of inhibitory ideas by severing them

¹ *The Psychology of Reasoning*, p. 53.

from their supporting conceptual systems, by revealing a contradiction between the idea and a conceptual system, or by building upon a conceptual system an argument supporting the antithesis of the inhibitory idea.

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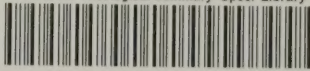
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